DECEMBER, 1923 VOLUME LVIII, NO. 4

THE BOOKMAN

PIONEERS AND CITY DWELLERS

By Hamlin Garland

ONE day last summer as my wife and I were passing down the Strand in London we were moved to enter the handsome new building which stands in Aldwich Crescent, whose lower floor is devoted to an exhibition of Australian products. After wandering about, in admiration of the exhibits of grain and fruit, we found ourselves following the signs which pointed to a moving picture theatre in the basement. Posters informed us that scenes from Australian life were on exhibition, and we were mildly curious to experience what of charm the antipodes might have for us. Our memories of the middle west, and its farm operations, were still vivid and we sought to draw from this film drama interesting comparisons by way of agricultural methods, and a background of landscape.

An audience of several hundred people was assembled, many of them no doubt Australians who had dropped in to see how their home scenes looked when thrown upon a screen. At once we were plunged into the midst of a sparsely settled farming country, where forests were being subdued and homesteads planted quite in the traditional American fashion. The trees were somewhat different from those I had known in my youth but the roots and the grains were quite the same and the methods of planting and harvesting similar to those to which I had been accustomed. The landscape presented was attractive, and there was something in the open air vigor of the men which appealed to me strongly. Nothing of the Old World was in their action or the expression of their faces.

Now in England at this time there existed nearly a million and a half of unemployed men and women (some of them may have been in this audience) and I understood that this exhibit both by way of farm products and farm scenes was designed to stimulate emigration. Knowing this, I was careful to note how this audience of four hundred people reacted to the lure. That they were mildly pleased was evident,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but that any of them were thinking of exchanging their lot in London for that lonely, far away Australian life, I could not believe. Some of them felt, as I did, a kind of pity for the rancher's wife and the little girl washing her dolly's clothes beside the cabin door. Theoretically it was a healthful, prosperous place for the unemployed of London; actually, I think almost every individual in that audience considered that farm to be a fearfully long way from Piccadilly.

As I sat there, I reflected on the American farms and villages I had seen during my recent tour of the Western States, a trip which took me through Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, and Arizona, and brought me back by way of Utah, Wyoming, and Nebraska. I saw in this Australian film something of the same isolation, something of the same deprivation of which those western citizens complained. Everywhere I went I had come upon groups of lovers of books and the drama who were enduring rather than enjoying the modified form of pioneering to which they had been called, and I wondered (once again), "How many people are there in England or America who possess that love of the open, that joy in the far country which my father, and my uncles, manifested in 1855?"

Turning to my wife, I asked, "How should you like to leave New York for a ranch in Wyoming, or a farm in Wisconsin?"

"I shouldn't like it", she frankly replied.

"Neither should I", was my equally candid confession. "I begin to doubt whether there is, in these days, the kind of psychology which makes pioneering possible. I doubt whether this film has roused in any Londoner's bosom a desire to go to Australia. Something has gone out of this age. Or perhaps something has come into it which makes city newspapers, city plays, and city songs more desirable, more necessary than the health, the wholesome food, which these Australian settlers are said to enjoy. All the excitements of our day are toward centralization. The average man of today is too gregarious to be a pathfinder."

This impression of the Englishman's psychology was substantiated recently by an article in one of the papers, in which the statement was made that notwithstanding all the propaganda on the part of the Australian government, notwithstanding the fact that the British Parliament had voted a large subsidy in aid of emigration, only a very small number of Englishmen had been led to sail for Australia. Those who did migrate, came to the United States, to the full number of the permissible quota. "They prefer coming to where there are cities, high wages, and a certain variety of civilization", explained the editor.

This psychology of concentration appears typical of our day. Everywhere I go in the west or south, I come upon students, professors, writers, artists, and booklovers who appear to me to be pioneers, lonely, discontented exiles on our intellectual border. It would appear that they are all longing for the city. The love of crowds, the wish to live in great centres, is well nigh universal. It is the dominant psychology in the youth of today, and I am appalled by the far reaching implications of this desire for the crowd, for human contact, for comradeship.

I must confess myself a victim to the power of this lure. It took me to Boston forty years ago, and it brought my family to New York ten years ago. Theoretically I should at this present moment be living in a patriarchal log house on the crest of a noble bluff over-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

looking the Mississippi river, at La Crosse. Without doubt I belong there, as Barrie belongs to Kirriemuir, and as Brand Whitlock belongs in Ohio, but actually, I am more at home in Forty-Third Street. I no longer care to pioneer, even in the literary sense. I honor William Allen White and Zona Gale for their loyalty to their native states but I find myself unwilling to follow their example.

It is a weakness in me, I will admit, but it is a weakness which I share with many other midwestern writers and artists. We are all entranced by the city. If the people who wish to live in New York were able to follow their inclination, we should have a city of twenty millions instead of seven. If this psychology of concentration persists for another century, two thirds of our population will be within the theatre zones of a few great cities.

It is easy to be humorous about this tendency, but at bottom it is not a joking matter. If this desire for the city is a very real and natural hunger it must somehow be fed. It cannot be reversed. If it is potent in the Old World, as I suspect it is, it will profoundly affect the policies of England as it has the policies of France. The French people are no longer pioneers. They love France so well that the wealth and freedom of the open has not profoundly moved them for at least a hundred years. They have regulated the birth rate in order that it might not be necessary for their sons and daughters to settle new lands.

Great Britain, on the contrary, has been a mighty, ever flowing well-spring of pioneers, world explorers and wilderness subduers. From Scotland, from Ireland, and from Wales, ceaseless streams of people have poured to replenish the colonies, to build up Canada, Australia, and the United States. Germany has been the same sort of fountain. Will these two great nations continue to send forth these floods of colonizers? Is the psychology of German youth also opposed to pioneering?

I suspect that there is more in the recent visit of the Prince of Wales to his ranch in Canada than appears on the surface. Perhaps it is a shrewdly planned excursion, calculated to revive the spirit of colonization and make it fashionable among the English unemployed.

In saying all this, in admitting to myself and in myself a decay of the pioneer spirit, I am also the historian. On its physical side I hate the city. I loathe its bad air, its ugly brick walls, its tin cornices, its ridiculous water tanks, and its ever present garbage cans; but I find in it the intellectual companionship which I crave and the education and career which it offers my children. I dream of a noble old Colonial mansion, such as some of my ancestors lived in, but in actuality I inhabit a flat, seven stories from the pavement, and my only live stock is a four pound dog. I have no chores to do of a morning: no wood to split, no cows to milk, no snow to shovel off the walk. It is a bitter thing to confess, but I am obliged to toss a medicine ball against the brick wall of the elevator shaft in order to get exercise. My daughters have never been frost-bitten, or lonely, or painfully hungry in their lives. Granddaughters of a pioneer though they are, they are perfectly content to inhabit a cell in a New York City apartment building.

What is to be done with us? Argument will not change our psychology. You cannot convince my daughters that it is their duty to set an example by returning to Wisconsin. If I were willing to go, my wife would decline to accompany me. The truth is, she

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would repine in the wintry solitude of even Westchester County. She loves the social stir, the daily drama, the constant change, and the never failing surprise of life in New York. It may be that we are all dreadful examples of the corruption, the disintegration which the city brings, but we are contented in our decay.

No! I am not *entirely* content. Deep down in my consciousness is a feeling of guilt, a sense of disloyalty to my ancestors, of treachery to an American tradition which renders me uneasy. It may be that this feeling is only a survival of the mental habits of my boyhood and my youth, a sense of duty to my father, and an admiration of his heroic generation.

This painful stir of my conscience however is not strong enough to alter my course. So far as I personally am concerned I have no desire for further hardship. I am content to "peg out" right here in New York — or in London. I have no desire to go to Australia, or even to California. To winter in New York and summer in London is my present conception of a pleasing alternation of residence.

The truth is, we city dwellers are all afraid of missing something, if we go away to the country. Each day the telephone brings us lovely surprises. Each morning's mail has entrancing possibilities. It is necessary for us to be in New York during the winter — and also in the late spring and early autumn. If this is an abnormal state of mind, then almost all of the men and women of my acquaintance are abnormal. Birds and trees and waterfalls are all very well, provided they are taken in short vacations or by way of Sunday excursions, when everybody is out of town and there is no mail.

There are people, there *must* be people who still love to farm, to milk cows, to pick fruit and to dig potatoes — how else can we go on eating? — but such doings are not for me. I have had my share of all such activities. I am content to feed my goldfish and exercise my dog on the roof. I do not intend to play the hypocrite in this matter, urging the other fellow to go west as Horace Greeley did while enjoying Union Square and Broadway himself.

The normal course of aspiring youth is from Willoughby Pastures to Boston, from Toledo to New York. So long as people continue to love their kind more than they love cows and lonely hills and silent fields, so long will they continue to come together in populous centres.

Who am I that I should discourage any youth from adventuring to the city? Could any migration be more illogical, more hopeless than that I made forty years ago from Dakota to Boston? To outline the dangers of the city is but to add to its appeal. Even if this love for the city, this psychologic slant toward the city were wholly wrong, a menace to the nation, I do not see how denouncing it would stop it. It cannot be cured by cursing nor turned aside by prayer. We must wait for some vast impersonal force whose mandate will be as compelling as the sun.

Because pioneering was a lonely business in the past is no bar against its being a different process in the future. When need of altering the gregarious tendencies of youth is keen enough all the resources of art, literature, and invention will be turned in the direction of making the farm attractive, just as today all these wonder working forces are at play making the city the romantic, dangerous, and inspiring place which the sons and daughters of our pioneers have found it to be.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE SPANGLE THAT COULD BE A TEAR

By Fannie Hurst

With Sketches by Richard Lahey

THERE were three heads in the one bed above the pulled coverlets.

Sheets that had been washed in one water without bluing. Two brown heads. Ellie's and Little Bill's. And then Teddy's. The baby. His was exactly the white of taffy. Curious languor of the pigment. It was the color of a very gentle old man's hair. And yet on baby Teddy it was so young and so tender. The thistle down of it lay along his lashes. That little rill of light along Teddy's closed bluish lids. Night after night, looking down at her three asleep there, it was, unconscionably enough, the tenderness along Teddy's lashes that could seem to hurt Millie most. Hurt at her heart and hurt and hurt there.

Every night, Millie hurting there beside her three and Big Bill over in his big bed on the other side of the room grunting to her through the shag of his enormous mustache,

"Come on to bed, Mil."

"Comin', Bill."

It was so hard for Bill to keep awake after eight. If you drove a two ton truck and unloaded it to the maniacal clatter of coal down a chute and the grime got into your pores and made your teeth and your eyeballs look as white as a Negro's and you sweated even in December, it was not easy to remain awake after a supper of Millie's strong stew and potatoes that steamed as you broke them open.

Frequently, even before she undressed the children, Millie had to draw off Big Bill's shoes. Clump.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Clump. It was dreadful to see him sprawled asleep in them beside the supper table, with his chin in his chest and his nose in his mustache. Those enormous clod shoes that weighted him down so to the soot ridden days. Like a drowned man standing erect on the floor of a sea. Weighted down. Weighted down. That was it. Millie and Big Bill and the children, weighted down.

Standing there at her children's bed, night after night after night with that sense of the weights at her heart.

Especially around Christmas time when the Five, Ten, and Twenty-five Cent Store that occupied the ground floor of the tenement began to light up with red tissue paper bells and Christmas tree canaries, all the little closed eyes of her children seemed to open at Millie, gazing at her right through the transparency of lids:

You. You. We are weighted down, Mother. Drowning at the very bottom of the days. Why?

And once Big Bill, the enormous hulk of him, had seemed to answer back from the other side of the room. "Come on to bed, Mil." Poor Millie, sometimes she put her hand to her mouth to hold back the sobs.

Little Bill who was almost fourteen and looked eight. Presently his birthday would ring out like a knell. Fourteen. Working papers. Little Bill who wanted to be an engineer.

And Ellie who was eleven but looked fourteen. Little Ellie who had violet in her irises and the roundest loveliest little bulge to her legs. Like lyres. McClosky, who ran the Five, Ten, and Twenty-Five, had pinched her there one dusk in the courtyard and made horrid clucking sounds between his teeth. Big Bill had almost killed him. Millie had torn him off and led him upstairs and washed the hair — McClosky's — out of his mouth. That courtyard where the dirty snow lingered until late spring and little girls heard horrid lurking things. The horrid lurking things that Ellie knew.

Sometimes, standing there beside her sleeping three, Millie put up both her hands to hold back the sobs.

And yet somehow, the hurt that lay deepest, until she could feel her heart move outward and press against her dirty old corsets, was Teddy. His bluish lids with the rill of light along them. The thin little lids through which the baby eyes could time and time again seem to look up at her.

You. You. We are weighted down, Mother. Drowning at the very bottom of the days. Why?

Teddy who had a spot on his lung and needed sun and wide days that tasted of pine, weighted down close to the foul old smells that came up from the courtyard.

Oh God, forgive me. I didn't want him. I prayed. I begged. Keep it God, I kept saying. Don't let me have another. I can't do for it. I haven't the right to another. I knew before he came. Big Bill knew! I begged him. No more, Bill. He promised. But Bill — he's just a man. You're God. You shouldn't have let him, God. I prayed so. And now I've got him and I can't give him up. It's a sin to keep having them God, when you can't do for them. We can't give ours a chance. But don't take him back now, God. My Teddy. You shouldn't have let me have him. Oh God, now that he's here, I won't give him back. Make it so that we can do for him. Make that spot on his lung well — God — God — Bill's only a man. You're God — keep him from being bestial.

It was hardest of all near Christmas.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Three heads in the one bed"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Somehow when those six little eyes in the bed looked up through the closed lids. . . .

You. You. We are weighted down, Mother. . . . You couldn't look back. You couldn't meet those eyes. Six of them. Ellie who wanted a fur tippet and whose plump neck was all chapped. Little Bill who began to sniffle horridly as early as October. For two years Little Billy had been saving his pennies from running errands for Jo's garage for a radio set. Big Bill could grow pale under his shag every time he borrowed those never completed and never refunded savings from his son.

When December came around and the Five and Ten and Twenty-Five began to light up with tinsel, Millie's heart, from being heavy, hung in her body like the motionless clapper to a bell. To be furtive with one's own baby. To kiss the rill of light along his eyelids; kiss rather than dare to look down into the blue. To box Little Billy roundly across the ear when he sniffled for his savings that had gone to help out the emergency of a creosote lamp for Teddy's breathing. It was easier to box for reply than to look down into the troubled, thwarted eyes.

Of all the months in the year Millie hated December, with its twenty-fifth day mounted on it like a spangle. The spangle that could be a tear.

Ellie's tippet. You schemed and wore newspaper next to your skin when your ribbed undershirt would no longer hold the darns and you were glad when Big Bill, who had granulated eyelids from fatigue, had to work Sundays during the coal shortage. But still you could not manage Ellie's fur tippet. They cost four dollars. Rather dreadful, lumpy, dyed rat ones on the pushcarts. But you boxed Ellie's ears when she cried for it. Boxed her soundly because you could not look her in the eye or along the ridge of flesh where her neck was chapped. Teddy should have had a coat at Christmas. A sweet warm one that fastened up in front with brass buttons with anchors on. You wanted those buttons with the anchors on for Teddy and a blue sailor's cap with the name of a battleship across the front.

You wanted it with your heart. The heart that hung in your body like a still clapper and the more you wanted it the more you slapped with your sudsy hands. Not hard. Just boxed, stinging, little ears.

There was a twitch to Ellie in her sleep. You noticed it as you stood there beside the bed. The tender curve of her body. Ellie who was about to be a woman. Lovely little mystery of that. Ellie exposed to the horrid scuttling things of the courtyard. . . . Little Bill who wanted to be an engineer. Oh God, not to be able to look them in the face. Afraid of those irises that could stare right up through the lids. Oh God — no more — please — to bring into this —

The twitching. Ellie twitching there.

"Ellie. Baby?"

"Mother!"

"Yes."

"Mother, you there?"

"Yes. Sh-h, go back to sleep."

"Mother?"

"Hush up. I was just covering you up before I go to bed. You kick so."

"Mother —"

"Ellie, you sick?"

"No — but Mother — stay by me —"

"Why Ellie —"

"I'm so — hot —"

"Fever?"

"No. Just — scary hot — give me, Mother — your hand."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Sh-h-h, don't wake the baby."

"Mother —"

"Ellie, why are you twitching that way?"

"I — feel afraid, Mother."

"You've been dreaming."

"Moomie!"

"Ellie — Ellie — you haven't called me that since you were a baby!"

"Moomie — hold me —"

"Sh-h-h, don't wake the baby. Your father either. Sh-h, he's worn out."

"Moomie, you know Jo?"

"Jo who?"

"Jo."

"Ellie — Jo who?"

"The Jo in the garage next door? The Greek."

"Why, yes. But what Ellie — what — Ellie — what — what?"

"I didn't Moomie. I didn't. I didn't —"

"Didn't what, Ellie? Tell Moomie. Tell Moomie. Didn't what?"

"I didn't go, Moomie. He wanted. He tried to pull me — up. Where he lives. Over the garage. To show me — he said — his motorcycle to take me riding on. Upstairs. I didn't go, Moomie. He pinched. Look."

Oh God. Oh God.

"He pinched me, Moomie. See. But I didn't go."

"Ellie — Ellie — my baby — look at me Ellie. My all. My life. Tell me again and again that you didn't go."

"I didn't. I didn't."

"Swear it!"

"You hurt!"

"Swear it!"

"I didn't Moomie, but he hurt — where he pinched —"

"Ellie — my Ellie — Ellie —"

"Don't jerk so, Moomie."

"My baby. Go back to sleep. My baby. My life. Blood of my blood. My baby."

"It was right, wasn't it Moomie, not to go? It was right, wasn't it?"

"Yes, yes Ellie. Oh God, Ellie, never go. Never go. Carry that around in you. Mother's prayer. Never go, Ellie."

"Moomie, Moomie, what makes you jerk so when you breathe?"

"Sh-h-h, Ellie, don't wake your father. Go back to sleep. My baby. My precious. Ellie — promise Mother. Don't tell your father. Ever. He'll kill. It's so dark for you already, Ellie. Don't tell your father —"

"But it's all right Moomie, I didn't go."

"It's all right, Ellie. Now go back to sleep —"

Ellie's lids fluttering down. Precious curve of her. The room that was hot and a little sour with breath. The hot, sour gale of it in Millie's ears. The red, the rising gale —

God — God — Ellie — my Ellie — take her back, God — before they dirty her — take her back, God — now —

Millie in the red, the rising gale, stumbling across the room and gathering herself until she hung in a hook of fury over the big bed and the shamble of Bill lying there dozing with his dry mouth open.

Damn you. Damn you. Damn you.

"Huh? What say? Millie, that you? What the hell — come to bed —"

Big good natured Bill who cried onto the back of his hand when he took Little Bill's savings for the creosote lamp.

"Millie — what say?"

"Yi — yi — yi —" shuddering lips too sick to speak.

"What say? Come to bed, Millie — m'girl — come —"

"Yi — yi —"

"Come — to — bed, m'girl —"

"Yi —"

"Y'hear!"

"Comin' — Bill —"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ON A CERTAIN CONDESCENSION TOWARD SERIALS

By Rupert Hughes

IN a novel now having a large sale (and deserving it according to some, though to others its success proves its worthlessness), there is a scene in the home of an author who is said to have waxed exceedingly fat and popular because "he had learned to make 'serials' to order, and out of serials to make pictures to order." The quotation marks about the word *serials* are the author's own; he has the Henry Jamesy tricks of using quotation marks as a gesture of deprecation and of exclaiming "oh!" every now and then.

The contempt this author reveals for serials is familiar, but his contempt for the pictures is the more surprising since the high spot of his book consists of a tremendous fight between a man and a woman — the very sort of fight that has been enormously overworked in the movies until it has rather lost vogue.

His disparagement of the movies is already too old fashioned to matter much. It is taking its place with the dodo, and the ancient superstition that serialization is somehow hostile to high art.

All that a serial writer does, as I understand the business, is to look about every ten or twelve thousand words and make sure whether his readers are still with him or have absconded entirely. Then he does his best to quicken the interest somehow. He rarely does this by shooting off a gun or importing melodrama — at least the most successful ones do not. He simply does his best to reengage his readers' interest; and it seems to me that a decent concern for the readers' right to be interested is a foremost duty, a solemn obligation upon a writer, whether he write fiction, history, science, sermons, or what not. Critics are aware of this and the successful ones know that the swish of the lash is exciting, and flaying an author alive and putting salt in the raw is bound to interest readers.

This is all very well so long as the public and the critic realize that it is only a form of sensational indoor sport. The trouble is that a confirmed critic is apt to delude himself with the mania of grandeur and imagine that his pig sticking and bear baiting are really judgments from a seat of Delphic wisdom. He is apt to believe that when he uses the word *art* he somehow limits it; to believe that by merely speaking of "the mob" with contempt, he has lifted himself by his bootstraps above the mob. That is why critics are chiefly remembered for their astounding assaults on gentle hearted immortals. Shakespeare was accused of being "a drunken savage" whose language was "beneath the dignity of a country bumpkin". Dante was called "absurd", "disgusting", "stupidly extravagant". "Ivanhoe", "a wretched abortion". Chaucer, "unreadable"; Carlyle, "a mountebank" and his style "a travesty", etc.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

And all of these slaughterings were committed by eminent critics.

When I read similar things said of writings of mine, it gives me a solace akin to conceit.

But to return to the serial: It is not generally realized — in fact it seems to be generally ignored — that serial publication has been the habit of many of the world's most unquestionable geniuses.

Dostoyevsky is about as unassailable a name as any other in the critical opinion. He wrote all his novels as serials, always got money in advance, often failed to deliver his instalments on time, and was forever in hot water. Tolstoy's books were published as serials; "Anna Karénina" was interrupted in the middle by an interval during which the author's pen rested more than six months; and the epilogue was omitted entirely by the magazine editor. "War and Peace" took up several years in its publication. Hawthorne died with a serial novel begun in "The Atlantic Monthly" and never completed. It promised to be one of his noblest works. Charles Dickens died with "Edwin Drood" unfinished. There were many others.

The habit of beginning publication before a novel is concluded has always prevailed. Hawthorne writes of the first part of a novel of his being in type in Boston and the last part not even in the back of his head. Cooper, in his preface to "The Spy", tells how the first volume was published before he had the faintest idea of what the second would contain. (It should be remembered that publishing a novel in two or three volumes at intervals is a form of serial publication.) Cooper further states that after he started the second volume the impatient publishers forced him to give them the last chapters and put them in type before Cooper had decided what the penultimate group of chapters was to contain. "Tristram Shandy" was published volume by volume over a course of many years. Each instalment provoked the disgust of Walpole, Goldsmith, Johnson, and others.

Dostoyevsky says, "In Russia all the best work of modern years appeared in serial form." I was assistant editor on an American magazine that made a contract with Maxim Gorky to write a serial, which appeared first in English in this country.

The lowest form of serial writing, of course, is that in which an editor approaches an author with a suggestion of the editor's own. It becomes almost unspeakable when the editor has an illustrator on hand and wants a text to fit the pictures.

That insult was offered to a young newspaper man named Charles Dickens and the result was "The Pickwick Papers". In his preface to the volume made of this serial, Dickens tells how he was asked to write about a club and how the illustrator invented the picture of Mr. Pickwick that "made him a reality". And he adds, "My friends told me it was a low, cheap form of publication, by which I should ruin my rising hopes; and how right my friends turned out to be, everybody now knows."

The effect of this seduction was not only to commit Dickens to the career of a serialist, but in far off Russia to start a young man named Turgenev (or however you affect to spell it) on the same downgrade. He began with a serial of somewhat similar spirit, "The Memoirs of a Sportsman". Another great influence on Turgenev's career was the work of Maria Edgeworth!

Whatever one may thing of Georges Sand's work, she had an enormous in-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fluence on modern literature. When she broke away from her collaborator, and set up in business for herself, two magazine editors fought a bitter war over her future. The "Revue des Deux Mondes" got her away from the "Revue de Paris", and published her first serial in 1833; her last in 1876. As her biographer states, this means an uninterrupted association extending over a period of forty-three years.

It is the French custom to publish novels first in daily papers and magazines. It would be hard to find an eminent French author who has not so issued some or all of his works. In 1869 Zola contracted to write a long series of serials, and to receive a fixed monthly stipend. The "Rougon-Macquart" cycle was the result. The war of 1870 played havoc with the plans.

No name in English literature has more dignity than that of Thomas Hardy. His serial experiences are interesting. The editors cut "Jude the Obscure" to pieces and announced more than one title before publication; the title selected differed from that of the book. Du Maurier's wonderful novel, "Peter Ibbetson", was a serial that did not do very well by the magazine. However, it prepared the way for "Trilby", which, I have been told, caused three thousand old subscribers to cancel their subscriptions and twenty-five thousand new readers to add theirs. Swinburne and others call "The Cloister and the Hearth" the greatest of historical novels. Like the rest of Charles Reade's, it was first published as a serial. He expanded it later.

Haughty critics belittle "Uncle Tom's Cabin", though it was praised for its literary quality when it first appeared. It began as a serial and was inspired by a letter from an editor. The author received three hundred dollars for it as a serial, and when it came out in book form it had a success never equaled in the history of the world.

Dostoyevsky boasts that "Crime and Punishment" added five hundred subscribers to the magazine publishing it. This was a consolation, since the magazine that published his serial "The Idiot" lost circulation, either because of it or in spite of it.

Many critics assume that great writers never think of money. Their letters give the impression that they think of little else. But this is misunderstood. The professional writer knows better than to write falsely or insincerely; that is as bad business as it is art. He knows that he can sell best what he believes and does best. But he properly seeks the highest price and the best market for his wares and he is eager to provide himself and his muse, not to mention his wife and children, with all the comforts his work can bring him while he does more work.

One of the few times I have been idiotic enough to assail an unfavorable critic was when one said that I had formerly had ideals but had latterly gone down into the sewers for money. I protested that this accusation implied two idots; one the critic for thinking that a man could increase his maximum income by writing badly on purpose; the other idiot, me, for being fool enough to try it.

I often pity young authors whom jaded critics snatch out of obscurity to toss into the empyrean. Before long those fickle critics will turn away to pick up another youngster, letting the earlier favorite flop to the ground with the other discarded toys.

I could mention several eminent critics of our day, each of whom has

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his pet author whom he advertises in every article, and whom he will continue to praise only so long as the public is indifferent. It is funny sometimes to see a critic disparage a sudden favorite as soon as he sees a rival critic ogling his pet. There are a few authors whom these critics have never ceased to praise, but this is solely because the public has always left them alone in their admiration. Some of the more polygamous critics keep three or four authors in favor.

Dostoyevsky encountered one of these sultans. It was a glorious day in his life when the great Byelinsky came to see him, heard him read his work aloud, and rushed out to proclaim him "a new star arisen in Russian literature". But poor Dostoyevsky found others to like his work. Publishers fought for him and paid him advances; magazines increased their circulation with his serials; he became a best seller. The jealous Byelinsky was revolted. His secret idol, his literary mistress, had become a public wanton. And then he wrote (and let us remember the phrases I italicize when we read the terrific things contemporary critics say of contemporary writers): "Dostoyevsky's 'Mistress of the Inn' is *terrible stuff*. *Every new work of his is a new calamity.* In the provinces they can't stand him at all, and in Petersburg even 'Poor Folk' is abused. *I tremble at the thought that I shall have to read this novel once more.* We've been *well taken in* by our 'gifted' Dostoyevsky."

Dostoyevsky grew so used to abuse that when a certain short story of his was not torn to pieces he wrote: "Even the newspaper critics were benevolent."

In Russia, while the great Tolstoy, Gogol, Pushkin, Turgenev, Dostoyevsky and the others were in full glory, the Russian critics were complaining that Russia was puerile and childish in comparison with the rest of Europe. In the meantime the rest of Europe was marveling at the splendor of Russian literature.

How familar this is to us! Our noisiest American critics still shriek in our faces that we are hopelessly provincial, puritan, lacking in tradition, grace, polish. They did the same when Emerson, Whitman, Poe, Hawthorne and the others were flourishing. Today, as then, we have giants in every field of art, yet the critics talk of provincialism! Such critics and such criticism go on forever, in all nations and all periods, no matter who is at work.

The test of a reader or a critic is not only what he likes but why. Many people have no other real interest in an artist than the fact that in liking him they prove themselves pharisaically unlike the multitude; they like an artist because they hate the public, or because he hates the public.

But after all, how cheap and easy it is to hate the public! — or pretend to. To hate the movies because the public flocks to them; to despise serials because popular magazines publish them; to contemn best sellers because they sell best; to abandon an artist as soon as the crowd discovers him; to accuse him of selling his soul for money simply because the mob has made a path through the forest to his dwelling place — how pitifully absurd!

As for critical attacks on literary men, they are often the mere whipping of the sick. The poor author is usually doing his best; he is in an agony of creative torment; he is wrestling with the invisible or suffering epilepsy under an onset of enthusiasm. (Once when Dostoyevsky was

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in prison lying down in his cell after one of his epileptic attacks, a Major Krivzov ordered that he be dragged out and lashed.)

It is all a part of the day's work and one must not whine for the moon. Critics flourish as long as authors write, and authors are themselves often the most heartless critics of other authors. Dostoyevsky loathed Turgenev and Turgenev, at first enthusiastic, turned against Dostoyevsky. I protest simply against the folly of taking criticisms as gospels.

Hawthorne once wrote his publisher: "Mrs. Hawthorne is reduced to thirteen cents", but Dostoyevsky tells of pawning his last pair of pantaloons to pay for a telegram to an editor asking for money. And worse was to come! His wife had to pawn a very important and intimate garment to get the money when it came.

It is perilous to let an artist keep pecking at his own creation. He may be the worst of critics. The first things that too much revision destroys are the precious gift of enthusiasm, the fine rush of spontaneity, the courage of impulse. Some of the absolute masterpieces of all time have been dashed off and never revised. Others have taken long polishing. But just as many master works are killed by over-refinement as by under-refinement.

There is a well known novelist among us who publishes a novel once in two years. By that time the result is stilted, styleless, academic pomposity. I think that if he wrote faster and oftener, or had somebody near to rescue his infants from his Saturnine cruelty, he would do better.

In every case, Dostoyevsky's serials began publication long before the story was finished. Often he wished to stop and write something else. Once or twice he did, and sold it to another magazine! — with direful effect on his relations with the original publishers.

The editors of this genius treated him as editors have treated lesser fry: they revised his work, cut out what they did not like without letting him know, or compelled him to make revisions. In the case of "Crime and Punishment" (which begins with the usual murder mystery, the familiar dead body) the editor had to reduce the space he gave the earlier instalments. He skipped one number entirely in the summer; he omitted one chapter which Dostoyevsky had considered a positive inspiration; he rewrote another without consulting the distant author. In fact, the editors of Russia's golden age did the very things to their golden geniuses that critics denounce as a peculiarly American way of treating our peculiarly trashy writers.

Dostoyevsky was a particularly difficult author to handle. He had epilepsy, he had frenzies of self contempt, he had a genius for getting stranded in distant countries whither it was hard to send him funds — especially as he would run himself so low that he could not pay the local two thaler tax on a prepaid message.

This was not because of laziness. His great soul was writhing in immortal longings to perfect immortal thoughts. He had characters who simply would not behave. He made sudden shifts in his plot. The last instalment of one of his serials never did appear in time. It had to be supplied long after to the subscribers as a supplement. This is the unpardonable sin in the publishing world.

Dostoyevsky's habits were typical. He was a Hercules in labor and at rest. Sometimes he wrote eight or nine hours a day; sometimes he wrote

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

all night. He smoked incessantly, spent too much money, dressed foppishly, suffered great physical distresses, and endured terrible critical assaults. He was a ferocious patriot and was infuriated by the patronizing tone many Russians assumed toward their national literature. He insulted Turgenev for disdaining his own countrymen, and never forgave him.

For his second wife, he married his stenographer. She was a godsend to him, according to their daughter's account of their life. She took dictation or gathered the cluttered pages he covered with ink at night and made neat copies of them. She gave him superlative praise and just enough criticism to make him think that her praise was reasoned.

Thomas Hardy also married his secretary. Though there is no more dignified name in the history of fiction, we should not forget that his serial, "Tess of the D'Urbervilles", was received with horror as a dirty piece of erotic sensationalism. It was called a "filthy" book and thrown out of innumerable libraries — as was "Jude the Obscure".

Hawthorne's "The Scarlet Letter" was reviewed as a vicious attempt to introduce into American homes the nastiest spirit of French fiction. And no wonder! since it concerned the illegitimate child of a preacher and a Puritan grass widow — a pretty triangle! It was not a serial but it was a best seller. "The Marble Faun" was another. The English publisher would not keep Hawthorne's title in spite of his earnest prayers; and the critics could not understand the plot. I wonder how many people realize that it is built around a case of forced incest; that is why the alleged portrait of Beatrice Cenci plays such a part.

With Tolstoy, Hardy, Hugo, Dumas, Dickens, Dostoyevsky, Hawthorne, and so many others as serialists one need not apologize for his trade. One need not blush for a best seller or for being accused of prurient sensationalism.

How severely classic the sensationalisms of yesteryear become in a few years! How insipid the archaic and the imitation classics of yesteryear become in a few years!

This everlasting experience everlastingly repeated might almost tempt one to the fatal hazard of accepting a generalization: that the domineering critic of the superior sort is always wrong. He is so apt to resemble the grammarian, the lexicographer, the writer of theories of music and the artistic textbooks in that he is always just discovering what the living artist has just discarded.

He lumbers along, peering into spoor, botanizing upon graves, recoiling from those who write with a smile and praising for their fashionable attire those who are wearing dead men's clothes — he mistakes archaism for classicism, imitation for dignity, pomposity for earnestness. He calls that "distinction" which is really rheumatism. The impatient and restless creators of tomorrow's styles, the fashionable authors about town always shock the pedantic critic — or if he praises them, it is for the wrong thing.

Characteristically, he turns to bookshelves for his classics and, not realizing that many of them were serials before they were volumes, he solemnly despises serials.

I repeat: I know that many bad novels are written as serials — having written some of the worst of them as serials myself — but it is not because they were serials that they were bad. They would doubtless have been even worse if they had not been serials.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE BOLOS AND THE ARTS

By Marguerite E. Harrison

With Sketches by Usa Gombarg

IT was only five o'clock but the last glimmer of twilight had vanished from the narrow street as we gathered around a samovar in the dining room of our guest house, 10 Horitonevsky, Moscow, for a cup of dried carrot tea and a thick slice of black bread before the long cold tramp to the Art Theatre where there was to be a dress rehearsal of Byron's "Cain". The performance was to begin at six-thirty.

We started off at a quarter to six, walking in the middle of the snow covered streets — by far the safest place, for the sidewalks often held unexpected pitfalls, and there were sometimes miniature avalanches from the roofs. As we proceeded down the Miasnitskaya we were joined by other parties of pleasure seekers bound for other theatres; for in spite of the fact that it was February, 1920 and Moscow was cold, hungry, and at war with half the world, it had not lost its love for or appreciation of the drama.

At the Theatre Place we separated, some going to the Bolshoi Oper, the Imperial Opera House, where Tschaikovsky's "Pique Dame" was being given that evening; others to the Little Theatre to enjoy a comedy of manners by Mme. Hippius; others to the Mali Oper, the Little Opera House, to hear Chaliapin in "Faust"; to the Pokazatelni to see Goldoni's "Pamela, Serving Maid"; to the Korsch to enjoy "Measure for Measure" in Russian; to the Gabima where old Jewish legends were given in Hebrew; or to one of half a dozen other playhouses.

When we arrived at the Art Theatre we presented our invitation tickets at the door and were shown into the foyer where an official in a faded but still splendid uniform insisted on checking our wraps notwithstanding the fact that the temperature could not have been over fifty-five degrees inside the building. In the old days evening dress had been *de rigueur* at the Art Theatre and the management still kept up the fiction.

Most of the seats were already occupied, many of them by artists from other Moscow theatres, retired luminaries of the theatrical world, former critics, Soviet journalists, commissars and their wives, members of the former bourgeoisie and aristocracy. A special box was reserved for Lunacharsky, Commissar of Education, who came with his wife and several guests. In front of me was Steklov, editor of the "Izvestia", who rarely misses a first night. Across the way was Kamenev, chairman of the Moscow Soviet, with Mme. Kamanev. In the audience were several poets, Briussov, Balmont, Dyeman Byedni. The majority of the spectators were simply, often shabbily dressed, but here and there was a much bejeweled lady, resplendent in velvet and sables of the mode of 1917. Such costumes were usually worn by theatrical folk who

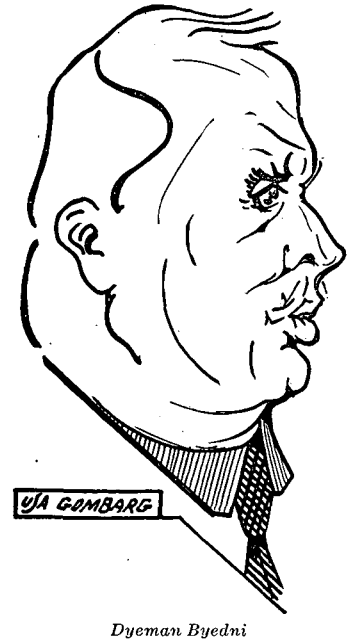
PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

were allowed to keep their jewels and gowns as part of their professional equipment, though more often than not they sold them to obtain food supplies to supplement their slender rations.

Except for the fact that everything was shabbier than formerly, including the audience, the silver grey interior of the Art Theatre with its luxurious seats and softly shaded lights had undergone no change. Uniformed girl ushers circulated up and down the aisles, there was the subdued hum of conversation common to all well bred audiences, people were visiting in the seats, in the boxes. It was an ordinary first night scene.

During the entr'actes the audience promenaded in the foyer, as is usual in most of the theatres. At the Art Theatre there is a large room opening off the foyer proper, hung with pictures of all the notable artists who have played there in many different rôles, and scenes from various productions. When we had inspected all the pictures we entered the little restaurant adjoining it, packed with patrons who drank imitation tea and coffee, the latter colored with imitation milk, and both flavored with saccharin. They ate imitation cakes made of potato flour and glucose and shortened with sunflower seed oil, but there was nothing counterfeit about the plays they discussed, for the Moscow theatres included in their repertory many productions that would have been branded as too "highbrow" by theatregoers in America.

Some of the playhouses, such as the Opera and the Little Theatre, were nationalized, and run as government enterprises; others were still under their former management. The Art Theatre had never been nationalized. It was operated as a collective or cooperative enterprise, the staff and employees sharing the profits. A certain number of tickets for each performance were sold to the government at a fixed price and distributed among the members of the trade unions and office employees. The rest were placed on sale for account of the theatre at government ticket offices or sold from the box office. Despite the fact that front row seats cost 1,100 roubles, equivalent to four dollars and a half in those days, the theatre was always full. But expenses were enormous, and it was tremendously difficult to get the materials for costumes, stage properties, and above all electric light bulbs, which were the bane of Stanislavsky's life. In the production of



Dyeman Byedni

"Cain", for example, yards and yards of fabric were required to produce the illusion of pillars in the vast Babylonian temple which formed the most

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

effective scene of the play, and it had taken months to procure it.

The play itself, a pompous Old World drama, though effective as a spectacle, was rather tedious as a dramatic production, and going home that evening we voted it a failure. Stanislavsky himself acknowledged it to me one day when we were discussing the work of the Art Theatre.

"And yet," he added, "I think it gave me more pleasure than anything I have put on this winter. It is such a relief to live for a few hours each day in a world of demigods and heroes — to get away from actualities."

For this very reason, perhaps, with the exception of the Byron epic the most popular plays in the repertory of the Art Theatre were exotics or plays dealing with the past. The old historical plays, Pushkin's "Boris Godunov" and Mgebrov's "Czar Feodor", Chekhov's "Dyadya Vanya" with Stanislavsky in the title rôle, a translation of Henning Berger's play "The Deluge", a Russian dramatization of "The Cricket on the Hearth", and a French comic opera, "The Daughter of Madame Angot", with the most ravishing Directoire costumes, were more popular than the sincere and flawlessly realistic presentations of Gorky's "Na Dnye", or Tolstoy's "Living Corpse".

At the first and second studios, lovely little bandbox theatres where new plays were tried out and young players trained for the Art Theatre, the repertoire showed the same tendency to follow traditions. Among the plays I saw at these houses during the winter and spring of 1920 were "Youth", "The Rose Pattern", "Balladina", a Polish historical legend, and "The Green Ring" by Mme. Hippius, which was recently given by the Neighborhood Players in New York.

Stanislavsky, who is no longer a young man, was profoundly discouraged by what he regarded as lack of finish in his productions and by the fact that he was able to produce so few new plays. While taking no part in politics, he mourned the passing of the old order, and the broader phases of the Revolution with its social ferment and spiritual reactions made no appeal to his imagination. He felt that he was greatly handicapped by the absence of Mmes. Germanova and Knipper, and his leading man Kachalev, who had gone to Kharkov during the preceding autumn and had been cut off from Moscow by the Denikin offensive.

Nevertheless, he had a very wonderful company with a charming ingénue, a young Polish girl who, gossip had it, was something more than a friend to the great Djerzhinsky, head of the Extraordinary Commission. Stanislavsky loved to talk reminiscently and regretfully of his trip to London before the Great War, and of his hope of going to America. "It is the dream of my life", he said.

I knew most of the members of the company, casually at least. They were very hard worked people, for besides their work at the theatre many of them coached the Workmen's Dramatic Clubs that were established under the "Prolet Cult", a branch of the Commissariat of Education, and gave special performances when requisitioned by the government on Sundays and holidays in the "People's Palaces" (Narodny Dom) and in factories. In addition they performed much of their own housework and made their own clothing, but they were relatively better off than most people. They were allowed far greater freedom of speech and had many privileges.

After leaving Russia the Art The-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Stanislavsky

atre Company reacquired all of its original members, some of whom had been playing in Prague and other Central European cities, so it came to America practically intact.

The most interesting developments of the post-Revolutionary theatre in Russia, which, as I have indicated, was mainly proceeding along traditional lines, were the Kamerny, headed by Tairov, formerly assistant to M. Nemirovitsch-Danschenko, registrar of the Art Theatre, and the Children's Theatre.

Like the Art Theatre, the Kamerny, housed in a beautiful old baroque "osobnyak", once the home of a member of the Moscow nobility, was a repertory theatre. There, supported by Mme. Koonen, who is as lovely as she is gifted, and a company of talented young artists, Tairov tried all sorts of audacious experiments.

The settings at the Kamerny were the last word in post-impressionist decoration. They were what the Russians term *chinoiseries*, but they represented the working out of a definite theory. Tairov believes that the immediate appeal of any play is to the eye rather than the ear, and he lays great emphasis on symbolism in his stage settings and pantomime in his players. Every word is emphasized by pantomimic gestures.

The plays given at the Kamerny were revolutionary, not in their subject matter but in their treatment. For example, "Adrienne Lecouvreur" was played as a satire on the blood and thunder dramas of the French romantic period. "Brambilla", a story

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from the "Decameron", was treated in the same manner. "Salome" and "Sakuntala" were interpretations of oriental eroticism, done with the tongue in the cheek. The nearest approach to convention was in a fanciful pantomime, "Pierrette's Veil", which had some very lovely incidental music by a young Russian composer. When the material is at hand Tairov will probably produce inimitable comedies of Revolutionary manners, but at present no work of this kind is being produced in Russia. People are too close to the great events of the Revolution to see them in perspective, and then, as Stanislavsky said to me, "They want to get away from actualities."

True, there were theatres, government owned, where so called "Revolutionary Satires" were presented to the public, but they were as a rule merely crude Communist propaganda. The only author who attempted to treat the Revolution in a spirit of genuine satire was Maxim Gorky, whose satire on the Communist régime was received by delighted audiences and promptly suppressed by the government.

The Moscow Children's Theatre had been a going concern since 1918. Substantially, it is a realization of the scheme which Americans interested in the Children's Theatre movement have so far failed to carry out except in a most fragmentary manner. It is a permanent institution, housed in a most attractive setting, where performances for children are given semi-weekly, or oftener, by an excellent company under the direction of M. Paskar. It was operated by the government during my stay in Moscow.

I shall never forget the delight of the youthful audience over the performance of "Mowgli", a dramatization of Kipling's "Jungle Book" which I saw there in the spring of 1920. Other plays in the repertory of the Children's Theatre were "Tom Sawyer", Russianized but essentially the same old Tom; Scribe's fantasy, "The Bear and the Pasha", "Joseph the Beautiful", a Biblical play by Chumachenko, and picturizations, with music, of several of Moussorgsky's "Children's Songs".

Those I have described are but a few of the many worth while theatrical enterprises in Soviet Russia. There were also several cabarets similar to Balyéev's* "Chauve-Souris", which I saw, substantially as given in New York, in his semi-subterranean music hall on the Leontievsky Pereoulak in Moscow, where the "Sudden Death of a Horse" was accomplished every evening amid rapturous applause, and Balyéev engaged in a running fire of comment on current happenings in Moscow that sent his audience into peals of laughter.

Besides the regular theatres, there were scores of workmen's dramatic clubs; every regiment in the Red Army had its dramatic organization; the propaganda bureau of the Soviet government sent ambulatory companies through the streets of Moscow on flat cars to give open air performances on holidays. During the meeting of the Third International in Petrograd in 1920 a remarkable historical pageant was given for the visitors.

As I write, I have before me a description in the fortnightly paper issued by the Petrograd "Dom Literatorov", the Authors' Society, of the Annual Pushkin Festival held in Petrograd in February, 1921. On Feb-

*This is a phonetic rendition of the name of the director of the "Chauve-Souris", commonly written "Balieff".

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ruary 11 there was a meeting of the society at its headquarters where papers on the life and works of Pushkin were read. On the same day many of the theatres gave special Pushkin performances. The Alexandrinsky Theatre gave "The Avaricious Knight", and scenes from "Boris Godunov"; at the Marinsky Opera House there was a gala performance of "Ruslan and Ludmilla" with Glinka's music; the Mikhailovsky Theatre presented "Eugene Onegin".

On the twelfth, a Pushkin exhibition, displaying relics and manuscripts of the great poet, was opened to the public; the Philharmonic Orchestra gave a concert, the program of which was made up of music inspired by Pushkin's poems; and in workmen's dramatic clubs all over Petrograd scenes from his plays were reproduced and recitations given from his works.

No material privations or difficulties can destroy the love or enthusiasm of the Russians for the arts. In spite of almost insuperable obstacles the theatres have always kept up their standards and ventured new productions throughout the entire period of the Revolution.

Until the inauguration of the new economic policy most of the theatres were either nationalized or helped directly or indirectly by the state. Afterward they were thrown entirely on their own resources and consequently some of them were compelled to close their doors.

During the past two years the repertories of the leading theatres have remained substantially the same, with the addition now and then of new productions, though at the time of my last visit to Moscow in February of this year no new plays of any consequence had been written or produced.

There was only one new theatre, Meyerhold's Workshop, where plays were staged without any scenery other than a back drop, and the Art Theatre had opened two new studios. A number of mushroom cabarets had sprung up, largely for the diversion of the foreigners. The public attendance at the theatres was perhaps less than in the old days, for since the theatres had been put on a regular commercial basis, there were almost no free seats and numbers of people could not afford the luxury of a seat at twenty or twenty-five million roubles. The only material change was in the increased comfort to theatregoers. All the playhouses were well heated and lighted, the buffets piled high with food; instead of going on foot you went by train, sleigh, or motor.

That little original creative work for the stage has been produced during the Revolutionary period is partly due to living conditions. While playwrights have had a large measure of intellectual and spiritual freedom they have had to work under such physical handicaps as never before during the past five years; and lack of contact with the outside world has distinctly narrowed the point of view of those who have remained in Russia. They have been looking at the Revolution through nearsighted spectacles and they have seen it only in detail. The same is to a certain extent true of the poets, though they have done more creative work since the Revolution than any other class of writers.

Roughly speaking, they may be divided into three categories — the poets of the past generation, the extremists, and the proletarians. Of the first, a few such as Balmont, Block, Bieli, Briussov, Akmatova, and Kuzmin have found little inspiration in the Revolution. Their recent poems are full of the tragedy of the Russian upheaval

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

— they see in it the twilight of the gods, the overthrow of the old world order. Some, like Alexander Block in his "Ballad of the Twelve", have the vision of a world regenerated through suffering, the dawning of a new era of faith and love; others, like Alexei Remisov, write of the unfulfilled hopes, the disillusionment of the Revolution.

What do I seek? Myself I do not know.
I seek for nothing and my life is purposeless.
Rage fills my soul; impotent rage;
A generation rose within the land
Which promised all things
And changed all to nothingness!

These older poets were not in evidence among the crowds that frequented the Poets' Café, the Domino, where, in defiance of the Food Administration, you could get ices, cakes, and coffee of an evening after the theatre. Like every other place in Moscow it was tawdry and down at the heel, the cubist decorations on the walls were faded and dingy; the lights were dim, the place stuffy and cold and none too clean. There I was often an interested listener at debates between rival schools of younger poets whose nomenclature is as fantastic as their verse. Imagists, futurists, expressionists, suprematists — some of them men of real talent, others eccentrists of the worst description. It was frequently positively fantastic to see these men, all of whom were face to face with grim actualities, absorbed in their *chinoiseries*. They reminded me of nothing so much as a lot of starving children trying to satisfy their hunger with the airy trifles the confectioners call "kisses". Either the spirit of the Revolution had passed them by or they deliberately blinded themselves to its meaning, shut their eyes and ears and lived in a world of their own creation. I happen to recall a few lines of which the following is a rough translation, that will serve to illustrate their manner. They are the conclusion of an ode to spring by Pasternak:

Mayakovsky

O verse, become within my hands a Grecian sponge.
I'll lay thee in the garden over night.
There on the dank green moss grown garden bench
Absorb the loveliness of sky and sward.
When morn comes I will take thee — lay thee on my paper,
And the blots will be the very essence of spring.

The only poet in the clique of eccentrists who had produced any really virile work was Mayakovsky, who had written a rather fine Revolutionary march, "Left", in which he called on the Russian eagles to proclaim the victory of the proletariat.

Most of these men would at the best have a limited public. In 1920 they were almost entirely confined to the necessity of inflicting their productions on one another and the small group of intellectuals and curious foreigners which frequented the Domino, for it was next to impossible for au-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

thors to get anything printed in those days except propaganda or educational literature. I knew of but one publishing house which produced anything except work of this class, and it was under the control more or less of the Department of Education, and protected by the presence of a number of Communists among its contributors. It was called "Centrifuga", and its contributors the centrifugists. They got out a rather attractive monthly magazine containing short stories and verses by the newest writers.

While the strict Communistic régime was in force the Soviet government did not regard poetry as productive work unless it served some definite purpose, and the chief purpose of all literary work in Russia at that time was propaganda. Consequently the poets had to have another job on the side in order to own bread cards and have the right to draw rations. Some of them, such as Mayakovsky who was an officer in the Red Army, took to writing the verses used on Soviet posters to stimulate enlistment, to warn against the "cootie" as a disseminator of disease, or extol the merit of frequent ablutions. Bobrov, another of the younger poets, was employed during the day compiling statistics for the Commissariat of Posts and Telegraphs. He wrote at night and in his spare moments at the office. A story he told me illustrates the material difficulties with which the Muse had to contend in Revolutionary Moscow.

"Last winter it was so cold in my room", he said, "that I used to go to bed, pile on all the covers I could find, make a tent of them, and retire inside it with pencil, paper, and a bedside lamp. It was the only way I could keep my fingers limber enough to write."

One of the centrifugists, Axionov, was employed on translations of foreign plays for the Commissariat of Education and acted as interpreter for foreign journalists and visitors, reporting their opinions and activities to the authorities.

The poets who are doing really vital work in Russia at the present time are, however, men of quite a different stamp. They are the Proletarian poets, who are genuine products of the Revolution. Their work is crude, but often picturesque and forceful. Most of it is written in the vernacular or in peasant dialect. Sometimes it is merely doggerel propaganda; again it displays real feeling for rhythm and charmingly naïve imagery, and an instinctive appreciation of beauty. The greatest of the Proletarian poets is Kluyev, a peasant from the Murmansk district, whose "Izba Songs" are a homely but exquisite revelation of the soul of the peasants of the north. He has also written a fine collection of Revolutionary verse called "Roses of the Commune". Kluyev is, however, sui generis. I have classed him among the Proletarians because of his origin and his choice of subject, but the real Proletarians are men like Dyeman Byedni and Gerasimov. Their poems, when they can be said to follow any rules of versification, are based on a choppy irregular rhyme, called the *tschastushka*, perilously approaching doggerel. These men treat the worker as a cog in the great machine of production. Work is their God, the factory is the body, the motor the soul of the Revolution.

Byedni is a typical working man, and while his work has little real merit he is the most popular poet in Russia today, particularly with the Red Army. He is, in appearance, a sort of glorified Moujik, big, blond,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

broad shouldered, with a delightful childlike smile; and he always wears a Red Army uniform.

These men ground out their verses by the yard to order for the Centro Pechati, the great government printing agency in which Maxim Gorky was employed as head of a bureau for translating the world's literary masterpieces into the Russian language. Their small supply of print paper was monopolized largely by the tons of propaganda literature, and the book depots of the Centro Pechati were piled mountain high with pamphlets and brochures; and at the Poets' Bookshop on the Kammergiersky Pereoulak, opposite the Art Theatre, seedy poets, past the legal working age of fifty, eked out a scanty existence by selling a few poorly printed volumes, issued by hook or crook, and books from their own libraries. The shop had only a semi-legal status and was winked at by the Soviet government, which had declared the contents of all private libraries the property of the state. The authors' bookshop in the Leontievsky Pereoulak had the same status, but as the government was not able to provide from its Department of Social Maintenance for persons in this category, these cooperative enterprises were allowed to exist on sufferance. Vast quantities of books were also sold on the Soukharevka, Moscow's illegal market. Recent legislation has legalized this traffic, and there are numbers of private printing houses which provide excellent facilities for publication.

Novelists, essayists, and historians had a much worse time than the poets. Many were absorbed in the propaganda and educational departments of the government printing service, others worked for the Rosta, the official government telegraph agency, and just managed to keep body and soul together, physically undernourished and intellectually starving, although it was not true that those who were able and willing to work for the government had to face actual starvation. Salaries paid for this class of work in Moscow were relatively very low.

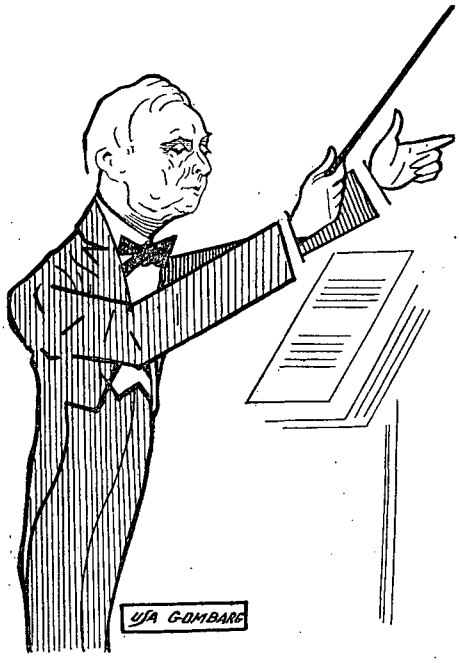
I knew a very talented essayist who did night work for the Rosta, lectured on literature at the University of Moscow, and translated Socialist pamphlets from the French and German, earning for sixteen hours' work a day barely enough to keep body and soul together. Another clever writer was twisting fables and fairy tales into Communist propaganda for children. The poets had their safety valve in their club where they could read their productions; and the authors and journalists also had their club on the Prechistenka, where I heard several delightful short papers read on various subjects.

But the man who had written an historical work or a four hundred page novel was deprived of even the consolation of reading his work to his colleagues, for it is impossible to give an accurate impression of a book of this kind in a single evening. Actually, I doubt if many men had time to write, or the impulse to create anything of this character. Like the Revolution, they were living through a period of unproductivity and transition.

Within the past year, however, they have had a great stimulus to further activity through the fact of being able to get books. Any foreigner arriving in Moscow at the present time will be struck by the enormous number of bookshops and kiosks; people are buying more books than anything else.

One evening during my recent stay

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Kousevitsky

in Moscow, I had a visit from the assistant director of the Children's Theatre. He came in with his arms full of books and a decidedly guilty expression.

"I'm ashamed to go home to my wife", he said. "I got my weekly salary today and I haven't a rouble left. It all went for books."

Probably in the near future we shall hear from the great prose writers who have remained in Russia, but so far they have produced little except short stories, some essays and historical studies. Among the few writers of the older generation who are left is Couperin, who has been chiefly occupied with giving lectures on literature.

Painters fared rather well on the whole after the Revolution. The majority were employed in making the very interesting propaganda posters, which like the propaganda literature covered, only pictorially, every activity of every Commissariat. They were done in crude hard colors, necessarily limited in range owing to the scarcity of lithographic inks. They were quite different from anything produced in America or Europe and often most original in composition, though faulty in technique. They possessed the prime quality of riveting the attention.

Other artists devoted their attention to designing stage settings, most of which followed conventional traditions. The Kamerny, however, employed a group of artists to whom Bakst was a back number and who represented the last word in modernism. One of them, a woman, Mme. Exter, had done some particularly striking work.

Most of the government artists and designers worked in community ateliers, but some had their own studios, and I was several times a guest at studio parties which differed very little essentially from similar functions in Greenwich Village. Pictures had almost no market in Moscow, however, and painters had very little opportunity of disposing of the work they exhibited at the Moscow salon organized by the younger artists and held every autumn in a hall on the Dmitrovka. They took themselves very seriously. There were various new schools, on the whole not very different from those exhibiting at the Salon des Indépendants in Paris. Cubists, futurists, expressionists, utilitarianists, and many others of which I never even mastered the names, had apparently entered into a race to see which could produce the most bizarre effects, or had taken refuge in artistic horse play, for it could scarcely be taken seriously. There was one school which employed as a medium only

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

white on black, another black on white, a third dull black on a varnished background, or vice versa. Cézanne and Picasso were to them what Giotto and Botticelli are to European modernists.

The composers seemed to be extinct. I heard no new compositions during my stay in Moscow, but much delightful music. The Moscow Symphony Orchestra, under Kousevitsky, who was invited some years ago to accept the post of conductor of the defunct Boston Symphony Orchestra, gave beautiful, though strictly conventional concerts throughout the season at the Conservatory. There were many fine choral concerts during the winter and frequent song recitals, but my particular delectation was a Chamber Music Quartet in which all the instruments were Stradivari. Formerly they had been in private collections, but at the Revolution they became the property of the government and were given to the best artists in Russia to use as long as they played in public. If anything could have induced me to become a Communist it would have been this fact, for I have never heard anything more luscious than the ensemble.

Not a bad record, all this, for a people who were from 1914 to 1920 in the throes of external and internal war, blockaded and cut off from their neighbors, and who since 1917 have been living through the greatest revolution in history.

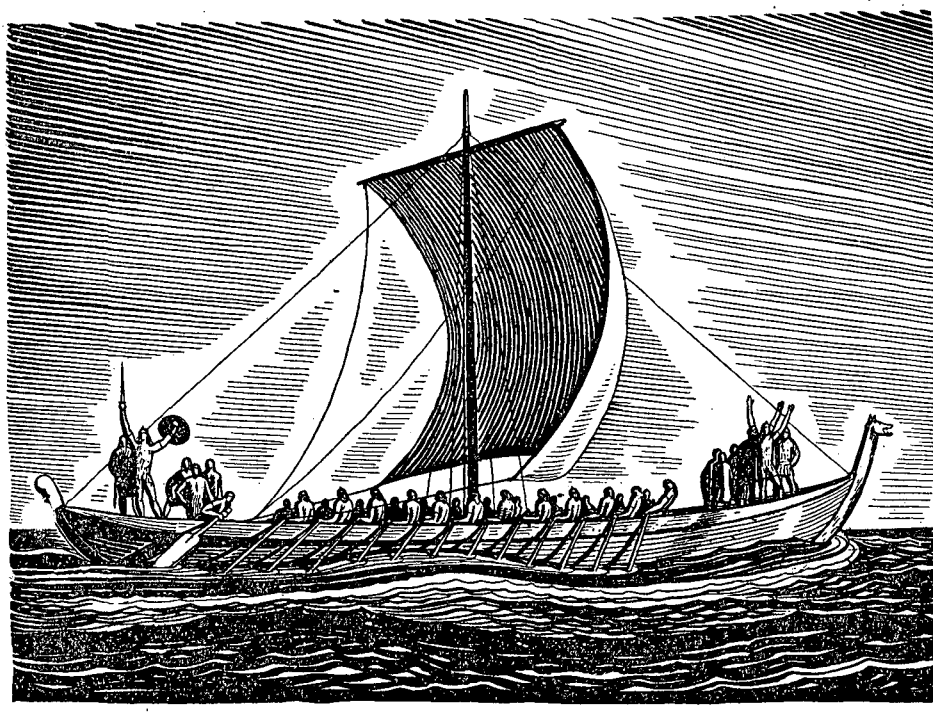
And yet there are pessimists who say that the Bolsheviks have killed culture in Russia! As a matter of fact, the social experiment of the Communists has brought about many material hardships which have reacted on the whole population, but the new rulers of Russia have never carried their iconoclasm into the realm of the arts. There is a side to life in Russia which no political upheavals or social developments can change or destroy. It is what the Russians call the *Duxhovnaya Gizn* — the life of the mind, the imagination, the spirit. It has always existed and always will. It is one of the qualities which make the Russians a great people. The life of the spirit is not dependent on externals, and in spite of — perhaps it would be more correct to say because of — the great changes that have taken place in Russia, there is no place in the world today where people live it more abundantly.

A SKATER

By Marion Strobel

YOU who wear battle grey,
Who are a savage thing,
And swoop on the ice like a bird of prey,
How is it your talons so glittering
Draw no blood as they press? . . .
Only loveliness! Only loveliness!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



SAGA OF LEIF THE LUCKY

By Hervey Allen

With Sketches by Rockwell Kent

THIS poem does not purport to reproduce the ancient saga of the same name which is also called the "Saga of Thorfinn Karlsefnni" and sometimes the "Saga of Erik the Red"; the poem is a new saga of the hero — discoverer of America in the year 1000 — a compendium of all the old sagas, plus the result of Leif's influence on the voyage of Columbus. This theme has been chosen because it is one which is at once peculiarly American and yet closely knit with our forefathers and the Old World, and because Erikson himself personifies that indomitable personal spirit of adventure, the heroic, questing soul of the Nordics which outfaced all mental and physical terrors and made the New World and most of the Old World its own. In a more feminine age it is perhaps well that this spirit should not be forgotten.

A strange obstinacy, partly due to the incurably documentary minds of historians, has caused some of them to doubt the credibility and significance of the pre-Columbian voyages and the Norse discoveries. Yet the records are there in the indisputable sagas; the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

significance of even a hint of this upon the ear of Columbus need scarcely be argued. And why is it "unlikely" that mariners who voyaged from Constantinople to Greenland should be unable to sail from Greenland to Labrador? The seagoing qualities of Norse ships have also nearly always been underrated by scholars who are embarrassed by even an umbrella in a high wind. As a matter of fact, these "dragon ships" were in many respects more seaworthy than the caravels of Columbus, and manned by more skilful crews. They were capable of, and actually did carry, heavy cargoes of merchandise and cattle for thousands of miles, otherwise it would be necessary to suppose a separate act of creation for horses and cows in Greenland and Iceland. How fatuous is that argument then, which admits a voyage from Denmark to Greenland and denies the possibility of a shorter voyage from Greenland to Labrador or New England!

Space will not admit here of much exposition; suffice it to say that nothing, with the possible exception of the burial of men in barrows in New England, has been put into the saga of Leif which is not justified by a careful research in a wide range of source material, approved by conservative authorities on Norse history. While the poem itself carries its own explanation, in order to give a background tending to a fuller appreciation of the memorable epoch out of which it springs, this brief account of the Norse voyages and settlement is appended.

In 863 the Dane Gardar, of Swedish origin, discovered Iceland, which had been visited before, however, by Irish hermits. Eleven years later in 874, owing to the oppression of the King Harold Fair Hair, the Norwegian Ingolf colonized the island. Here the old Nordic tongue was preserved unchanged, and here the eddas or folk songs, and the sagas or historical tales were treasured and preserved, forming a literature of immense historical value. The situation of the island compelled its inhabitants to exercise their inherited maritime skill.

Greenland, the next stepping stone toward America — for the Norse discovery was a gradual approach rather than one calculated voyage — was first seen in 877 by Gunnbiorn, who did not land. Erik the Red, father of Leif the Lucky, visited it in 983 and named it Green-land to attract settlers. Those who have read Stefansson's account of the wide possibilities of life in the far north will understand that Erik was justified in believing it habitable. The facts bear out this opinion, for in 986 Greenland was settled by colonists from Iceland on its southwest shore, which faces and is only a few days' sail from the coasts of America. Erik the Red settled in Eriks-forth or bay, and Heriulf, another chief, at Heriulfsness, *ness* meaning cape. It was the sons of these two chiefs who discovered America.

In the same year that Greenland was settled, Biarne, the son of Heriulf, on a voyage from Iceland to Greenland was driven out of his course to the southwest and saw, but did not land upon, the coast of America.

A little later Leif, the son of Erik, who had been converted to Christianity by King Olaf (The Saint), returned from Norway to Greenland. Off the coast of Greenland he rescued the crew and salvaged the cargo of a wrecked ship, and on account of the share that accrued to him and his men was called Leif the Lucky. Upon his arrival home, Leif found the great topic of conversation to be the new lands which Biarne had glimpsed to the westward. He and his father Erik

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

decided to fit out an expedition of discovery. Riding down to the ship, Erik fell off his horse and broke his leg, thus leaving Leif in command of the ship and about sixty men.

Despite a conflict in minor points all the sagas agree on the main facts of the voyage which followed. Leif steered southwest in the direction of the land seen by Biarne. His first landfall he called Helluland, a land of flat stones, probably Newfoundland. The next landfall he called Markland from its woods, probably Nova Scotia. He then sailed south till a great *ness* or cape of land turned him into "a river that flowed through a lake". This was Cape Cod and the river was the Charles flowing through the Back Bay. Here Leif built a house, the foundations and hearth of which have been found. It lies immediately behind the present Cambridge City Hospital at the municipal bathing beach and is marked by an iron railing and a stone.

A German in Leif's crew by the name of Tyrker found some wild grape vines which he recognized from having seen them in his own land; and for this reason the country was called Vinland the Good, wine being then something which would attract settlers. Leif returned, taking back with him the fruits of the country, including *masur* wood, of which more later.

Two years later, in 1002, Leif's brother Thorwold made another voyage to Vinland. He pushed even farther south the next year, but was killed in the summer of 1004 in a skirmish with the natives. In this connection, it is important to remember that New England at that time was inhabited not by Indians but by tribes akin to the Eskimo, as the findings of kitchen middens show. These people the Northmen called *Skraelings*.

The most distinguished of the early American discoverers was Thorfinn Karlsefnni. His genealogy, which counted for much in those days, and explains a saga's being named for him, can be traced in Norse, Scotch, and Irish ancestry of royal blood. In 1006 on a trading voyage to Greenland he married Gudrid, widowed daughter-in-law of Erik the Red, whose first husband had been lost in an unsuccessful voyage to Vinland. She, however, encouraged her second husband to try anew. So in the spring of 1007 with three ships and one hundred and sixty men, Thorfinn sailed to Vinland accompanied by his wife. He remained there three years and had many adventures with the *Skraelings*. His wife, Gudrid, bore him a son, Snorre, the first white child born on the North American continent, who later founded an illustrious family in Iceland from whom the famous sculptor Thorwaldsen of "Lion of Lucerne" fame is descended.

That a considerable Norse settlement was established in New England there can be little doubt; the sagas, of course, mention only the voyages of chiefs such as Karlsefnni. We know, however, from the sagas and from letters recently unearthed in the Vatican that one hundred and twenty-one years after Leif's discovery Bishop Erik Upsi of the Greenland See of Gardar sailed for Vinland. The presence of a bishop would argue a considerable settlement there.

Its principal industry seems to have centred about pelts and the gathering of *masur* wood, in plain English, the warts on oak or maple trees, which still abound in that region. These were highly prized and sold for great prices, having been thinned out in Europe because their beautiful close grain carves readily into cups and bowls or pans for house scales *(husa snorta)*. These burrs were floated down the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

streams of the Charles Valley where they were stopped by the stone dam at Watertown, Massachusetts, that was there when the English came. It was at this point or just above it that the town of Norumbega was built, the ruins of whose wharves and houses may still be traced. Here this valuable lumber was stacked, dried, and shipped to Iceland and Norway. The notices given by the old Icelandic voyage chroniclers of the products of this country are characteristic, and the total result of nautical, geographical, astronomical, and archæological evidence in fixing the position of Vinland is overwhelming.

The number of days' sail between the newly found lands, the striking description of the coasts, especially the white sand banks of Nova Scotia and the long beaches and downs peculiar to Cape Cod, the Kialarness and Furdurstrandir of the Northmen, are hardly to be mistaken. In addition we have the statement that the shortest day in Vinland was nine hours long, which places the country definitely between the forty-first and forty-second degrees of north latitude. And there are the dams and walls. The historian, Adam of Bremen, mentions the Country of Vines beyond Greenland in his thirteenth century work, "Descriptio Insularum Aquilonis"[1]. It was probably from this source that the city and country of Norumbega crept into so many ancient maps of North America.

In such an article as this it is impossible adequately to discuss the fascinating problem of the disappearance of Vinland the Good and its capital Norumbega. The great black plague, destroying as it did the communication between Greenland and Iceland and cutting off the latter from the mainland of Europe, together with the lack of mechanical means for the diffusion of knowledge, the rarity of travel, and the dense ignorance and indifference of the time, partly accounts for it. Greenland itself was lost and not revisited by the Danes until 1721, when only the ruins of the Norse settlements were found. The inhabitants were killed or destroyed by the Eskimo. Fair haired Eskimos and the remnants of old Latin chants and the sign of the cross among the northern tribes may be some survival. Vinland, however, was cut off entirely, the last recorded ship having come from America (Markland) in 1347. It was blown out of its course to Greenland and landed in Iceland. The rest is silence, but — and here we touch portentous possibilities . . .

In 1487 Columbus, the avid minded, visited Iceland[2]. Is it possible to suppose that this collector of every sailors' yarn about lands in the west did not hear *rumors* at least of the Land of Vines, when men were living whose grandfathers might have been there? We know it was the custom of the great navigator to talk with learned men and pilots whenever possible. Ferdinand Columbus gives only part of his father's letter, but in this it says, "I sailed 100 leagues west of Thule[3]." What had the discoverer heard that made him do that?

Such is the background and the story, one of the greatest stories of the white race, out of which has welled the "Saga of Leif the Lucky". It is, of course, inadequate to its source; but the theme is epic; heroes land upon our shores and it is with them rather than with the manner of their detailing that you should deal.

1. First printed by Lindenbruch in 1595.

2. "Life of Columbus" by his son.

3. Iceland.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LEIF was a man's name.
Over the great, white shoulder of the world he came,
Into a land as lonesome as a star
That God had set aside
For mortals not to mar—
Too huge for men—
Not till Leif's sons set foot upon the moon,
Will such a deed as his be done again.

Leif Erikson came rowing up the Charles
In the sea-battered dragon ships,
Stroked by the strong, blond carls,
The rattle of whose oars
Had wakened sea lions on the glacial shores
Of Greenland, where the white Christ newly ruled.
Leif brought the old gods, too,
The grim, scarred northern crew;
Though Olaf had baptized Leif,
Grace irked him strangely
As conscience does a thief,
And he feared the hammer of Thor
And the voice of the Norns[4]—
He was by sea winds schooled,
Mystery and fighting his trade,
And men had heard the braying of his horns
Above the boom and pother of the seas;
Thorgunna, the Sorceress[5], heard them at the Hebrides,
And Icelandic fjords, and dwellers
In the low eaved stone huts of Greenland villages,
Now roofless to the arctic sky
And the cold's malice
Five centuries staring up like a skull's eye
At the ghost dance of the borealis.
Leif steered southwest,
Watching the stars slip
Over the carved hair of the dragon's crest,
Until he drove on foggy coasts,
With great flat rocks, porches to bleak plateaus,
Where crowding icebergs grind.
Next, a landfall of dark forests piled like thunderheads
Against long, frosty hills behind.
Then south,
Past inland twinkling mountains
And a vast river mouth,
While vague voices bellowed at them from the sea;

4. The Norse Fates.
5. Leif lived with this "witch" and had a son by her.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In calms they heard the breathing whales;
Strange fish leaped flapping on their decks;
Spears winked in starlight,
As they patched the ragged sails,
Or polished shields with ballast sand,
Staggering up quivering mountains to the stars;
Staggering down;
Leaving a spuming wake;
Till a great tongue of land
Turned them west again
Into a river and a lake.
So Leif came rowing up the Charles,
He and his golden bearded carls.

Others came after him,
Bringing Norwegian women
With gold-wire braided hair.
These men built dams and cut the *masur*[6] wood,
Floating it down to Norumbega Town,
Where by stone quays
The long ships lay, with folded sails,
That in the spring took wing,
Carrying the wart wood and the skins
To Iceland, to Norway.
There craftsmen turned the wood to rune carved bowls
And sold them to the king
Or to the priests,
And the *berserks* gulped from them
At the feasts,
"Vas hael",
In frothing ale.
All this was sung by *skalds*
In saga tunes,
And set down by Olaf's priests in runes,
And then forgot.
Plague fell on Greenland's villages,
Breaking the last link in the chain,
Till the news died from lips of men
Through the dark years
And no ships came to Vinland coasts again.

II

Two hundred years—
Upon ten thousand miles of beaches
Never a sail dawned!
Never a glimmer or a shimmer!

6. Warts caused by insects on oak or maple trees, burrs.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Redmen and the *Skraelings*[7]
Kept the coasts,
With darkness in their brains,
Stealing up and down a little way
On useless, evil errands
Like painted demon ghosts;
The fire pots in their low canoes
Making a faint red glower in the sky.
So the long night eclipsed the day
While Leif's house moldered away.

Can you not see the winter closing down
Year after year on Norumbega Town,
And never a ship,
While mothers hid a trembling lip
And told old stories to the dwindling brood
Of fair-hairs round the fires?
Tales of Norwegian fjords, where *dwergs*[8]
Posturing against the northern lights,
Shouted at little villages
From the high snow-pastured *bergs*[9],
And *helgars*[10] milked the cows at nights.
Scant grew the food;
They killed their last red cattle,
Whose bellowings no longer frightened
Skraelings now in battle.
In the fields rotted the harrows;
Ever from the forest flitted the stone tipped arrows,
Till the old men slept in barrows.
And the youths followed old desires
Finding flat nosed brides beside the *Skraeling* fires;
Stone axes took the place of steel;
Bears' claws the teeth of seal;
Black hair the fair,
Till the last old woman died who used a chair,
Babbling in the lost Nordic tongue
Of Icelandic meadows,
And poppies of the midnight day,
Glorious upon Mount Hekla's slopes
When she was young.

Moss on the thresholds
Cold hearthstones

---

7. Probably Eskimos.
8. Dwarfs or gnomes, spirits of the mountain plateaus.
9. In the sense of icy mountains.
10. Demon women of the hills.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

White bones,
Trees in the houses,
Roots in the stones —
Vinland the Good,
Oblivion's kiss,
No land has greater mystery than this.

III

Four hundred years
Leif slept;
Saturn kept spinning in his rings
And the ants crept.

Then Columbus came to Iceland.
Did he hear of Leif?
A casual name treasured in old tunes,
An old man's tale, perhaps,
Rumors men passed along the docks,
Something priests read him from their runes?
By every rule he
Should have known
Iceland was Ultima Thule.
Here, however, was an ant who thought —
Clever —
Watching the tides and flights of birds,
Putting the words of fools together.
"God locks his secrets in a box
Whose key is paradox",
Thought Maestro Cristoforo.
"Therefore, it may be best
To go east by sailing west."
So he sailed a hundred leagues beyond all thought
Into the western ocean,
Where Leif beckoned through the devil's weather.

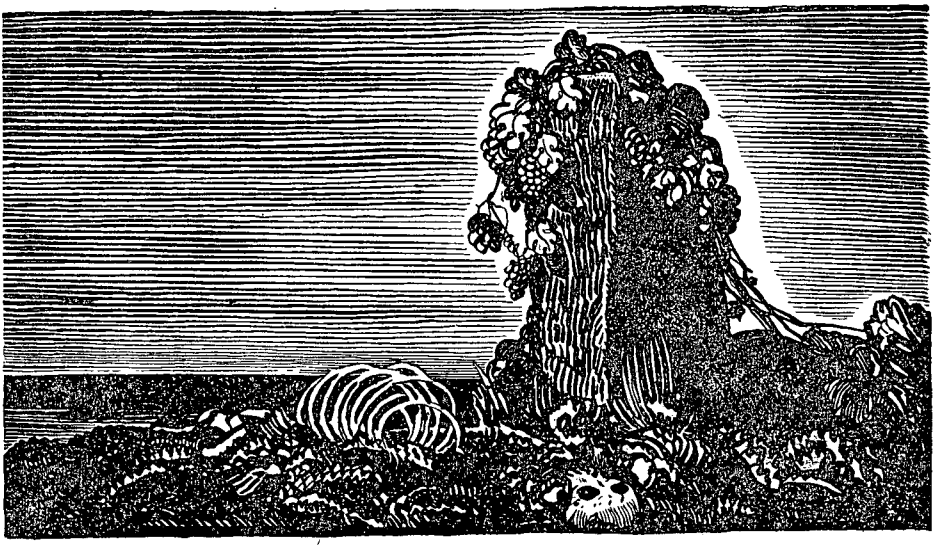
Next act:
Eggs have stood on end;
The priests rage in vain.
The word *gold*
Tickles the Ears of Spain;
Curtain upon an age . . .

Sweep on, you Caravels of Hope,
"Nina" and "Pinta" and "Santa Maria",
Shall it be said,
Son of Erik the Red,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

You were not with them
Because you were dead?
What ribbed the valid heart
Of the Great Admiral
To drive calmly on
Into the sunset
Away from the dawn?
Not all was reason; not all was maps,
But the old tales came back,
As he trod the deck at night,
Up and down, athwart, up and down—
The tale of Norumbega Town,
Lending a tonic courage to his hails
To the "Nina" and "Pinta",
As they swept on forever westward
And westward with the following gales.
And Leif was there the night
That they saw the mysterious light;
There in the dawn and the calm
When they lay
Like tired birds from heaven[11].
Leif was the first on the shore,
When they fired the glad salvo
On San Salvador.

11. The Caribs thought the ships of Columbus were birds from heaven.



Vinland the Good

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FRANK SWINNERTON

By Thomas Beer

A LITTLE honesty in a critical paper does no harm. Until Mr. Swinnerton wrote "Nocturne" I had never heard of him, and hearing then that his best novel was a consideration of love, I simply resolved not to read it. Love in Anglo-American fiction is repugnant to me — a thing lugubrious and disheveled with eyes cut from solid onion, hitched to a post in a rainy street and whimpering to be taken thence. William McFee has lately explained that sailors have forgotten more about love than most writers ever know. Mr. McFee's professional pride may constitute in him a certain bar to further additions. I suggest that healthy enlisted men in regiments of Field Artillery, all lumber jacks not facially deformed, and many chauffeurs have their memories. No, Mr. Swinnerton has charmed me against my will in "Nocturne" and "September" with portraits of lovers, but his maximum claim to my useless regard is that he seems to me the one possible successor of Henry James in criticism.

Conceived as a sport combining profit with the known pleasures of cruelty, criticism is all very well. Conceived as duty it usually becomes mere gilding of the vice crusader's ax. If Americans would take to reading the printed reviews and literary sketches of Henry James, we might have less sport, less bragging of duty, and more criticism. Circumstance has relieved Mr. Swinnerton of the "Master's" limitations. He is not emotional. His viewpoint is human before it is literary and he is never a snob. My acquaintance with Mr. Swinnerton is an affair of moments but it appears unlikely that he will ever admit to tears shed over a pair of corpses — on paper — and then sigh that the corpses were dreadfully dirty, after all. He might be mildly annoyed that a celebrity had received him in a dressing gown but that annoyance would hardly pervade his reflections, ten years later, as a grudging mist. He is a sardonic, not a sentimental comedian, and he comes to acts of appraisal with all of Henry James's grave regard for letters, without the American's irritating deficiencies, and with a thorough mastery of matter that James sometimes did not display. If he has not yet found a phrase so satisfactory, say, as "assertion of identity", he has asserted his own with grace and courage. The phrases may come hereafter.

Henry James tried not to forget that a law of partial credits is demanded of a critic who aspires to be taken seriously. If his prejudices rose to color parts of his best work he still did pursue in slow devolutions the glitter of a theoretic justice. He would outline — and for an utter stranger — his agreeable sensations before the prose of Havelock Ellis even when the sociologist's subjects made him shudder. He was honorable, to be brief, against the current of his profound sentimentalism. Honor, we are told, is a shadow cast by the sun. Well, we can ask nothing of critics and the truth is not

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in most of them, but when the sun does cast a shadow, let us a little delay in laughing at the shape. This man — remembered by too many of us as a rather garrulous old gentleman somewhat impatient when conversation swung from the range of his beliefs in himself, his art, and his associations — hunted the detachment of justice and often found it. That pursuit was so remarkable that its audience was necessarily small. Since his principal apologist has admitted the limits of his vision, lesser folk can limit their applause to an area. But he did pursue, and in that valued action I find Mr. Swinnerton his successor. He is not an imitator of Henry James. The imitators of Henry James in criticism seem to me mostly people who fully understand the immense force of coating vulgarity and evasion in the terms of delicate, accentless speech. It is not hard by making use of the Jamesian hesitation to call one writer a thieving puppy and another a dirty Jew with an air of gracious taste. The "Master" was sometimes silly but he was never a cad. Nor is it possible to find in the written criticism of Mr. Swinnerton a sentence in support of the theory sacred with such a swelling group of young authors, that an artist cannot be a gentleman — as proof of which belief they, rather obviously, are not going to bother about attempting the thing.

The publication of Mr. Swinnerton's book on Robert Louis Stevenson raised a small sniveling tumult not unlike the typhoon of tea that followed "Thus to Revisit", in which amusing volume Ford Madox Hueffer bared the fact that Henry James had habits unknown to archangels. All of Mr. Hueffer's revelations were harmless as filtered water, and not one of Mr. Swinnerton's objections to the deity known as "R.L.S." could offend a rational being, but to worship Henry James or Robert Louis Stevenson begets a madness in the brain. These dancers before a mirror seem to shake some powder almost aphrodisiac from their garments. To be an extraordinary egotist is the greatest gift of destiny. But must we have gods in letters, now that we are done with gods in trees and churches?

Advancing with civil deliberation on Tusitala, Mr. Swinnerton drew from under his arm not a dagger but the nozzle of a vacuum cleaner affixed to a singularly flexible tube. With this instrument he moved around the deity; at the end of the process, there is still a good deal left of the teller of tales that all may read. Discrimination works so. There was no bloody slaughter. "Prince Otto", "Virginibus Puerisque", "The Black Arrow", "A Lodging for the Night", "Markheim", "Olalla", "The Pavilion on the Links", "An Inland Voyage", and "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" are on their way to the dust bin. It is impossible to condense the method of Mr. Swinnerton into a sentence. The flexibility of his mind meets every test of the subject. "One need respect nothing in art", said Stephen Crane, "except one's opinion of it." But to produce that opinion in terms to be read by the reasonable without snorts, is another matter. If the gentle goslings who just now have joined Mr. Van Vechten's Peter Whiffle in the chase of a formula will diligently go through the long passage on "The Pavilion on the Links" they may see what happens to formula when it replaces imagination. The devil at Stevenson's elbow, says Mr. Swinnerton, was a craftsman. This has been said before, but never with such an argued and concessive effect. The true Stevensonian cannot cry "Prejudice!" in the face of the at-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tack. He must go the length of saying, "You are mad", or be silent. And while Mr. Swinnerton's book got its measure of abuse, I notice that very few of Stevenson's superior friends and admirers chose to retort.

It would not be easy to nullify the study. Mr. Swinnerton has been sufficiently generous at each stage of the game. He finds moments of sheer greatness in "The Master of Ballantrae" and he has kind words for bits of "The Wrecker" — a story dismissed by many ardent Stevensonians. He mentions "The Ebb Tide" carefully as an episode in which a "moral" idea holds together something that otherwise might be an incidental yarn. "The Ebb Tide" has always seemed to me a summary of Stevenson's case, as "Kim" is the summary of the case of Mr. Kipling. He makes no attempt to overturn "Treasure Island" or "Thrawn Janet" from their peculiar niches. If anybody cares to contrast the justice of two living critics, let him compare Mr. Swinnerton's work with that of the rampant M. Daudet. It is possible to disagree with Mr. Swinnerton's notion of good narrative, as here expressed — to me "La Chartreuse de Parme" is no more romantic than Mr. Swinnerton's "September" — but he has evolved from the material on hand a viable artist and his Robert Louis Stevenson, critically erected, is a person much more real than Tusitala adorned by his servants.

The volume on George Gissing simply continues the theme of justice. Mr. Swinnerton's earlier work, visibly, was influenced by Gissing but the hold of the unhappy Victorian was not sufficient to break his apologist's detachment. There has been a deal of gushing nonsense written about Gissing, while the man's actual position as an interesting transition has never before been dealt with fully. A critic of less sense would have tried to turn Gissing out in a more appealing posture but Mr. Swinnerton fully admits the secondary quality of the novelist's mind. There was no devil of a craftsman at Gissing's elbow. He flogged his brain toward appalling tasks and his ambition wallowed with him in a sea of mischance. His egoism, as revealed by Mr. Swinnerton, was stunning, and his simple awkwardness in writing anything kept him from the distinguished place for which he yearned. Henry James, in conversation, once likened Gissing's style to thick soup. In his intellect that same muddy tone unfortunately prevailed. "He thought", says Mr. Swinnerton, "that to be impersonal was to be objective, and as he was very nearly unable to escape from himself and his own preoccupations, he fought a losing fight all through his literary life." The whole battle went on within his conception of modern existence as an unholy chaos. Other artists of the transitional period beheld chaos but some of them could isolate for us — ironically, humorously, or sentimentally — a piece of this chaos and lend meaning to its whirl. Stephen Crane's "Maggie", written in his twentieth year, has a higher form and an infinitely less faulty structure than have novels written under no greater stress of poverty when the Englishman was beyond thirty. Gissing was a social novelist who couldn't write of society. What remains valid of his work Mr. Swinnerton shows in detail. I honestly believe that he somewhat understates the case for "New Grub Street", by the way, and the self pity that openly appeared in Gissing's reflective passages is no more offensive than the subtler whine of Dostoyevsky and the diabolic laughters — with saxophone

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

accompaniment — of Andreyev. Mr. Swinnerton says: "The fact that he was broken in health sufficiently accounts for the self pity revealed in some of the early and some of the late books. We shall do him more honour if we disregard it than if we try to exalt it into a virtue." I am led by the suggested thought into a hope that Mr. Swinnerton will some day busy himself with the whole school of self pity in written art, for Anglo-American criticism has freely swallowed from the Continental tear jug what it rejected in Gissing and sniffed at in Henley. Now that self pity has been fully accepted as a mode in American letters, we need an Englishman of position to knock the nasty thing away again. The book on Gissing, of course, is no such opportunity for Mr. Swinnerton as was the dusting of R.L.S., but as achievements in valuation the two volumes go well together.

It appears to me that Mr. Swinnerton's quality as a comedian has been slighted in most of the American reviews: love is so solemnly taken by our critics that a novelist who has made love his subject in three good books is certain to be discussed with grave gaspings by the flittermice. I am told that he is essentially a tragic writer and, unable to swallow tragedy, I herewith admit my powerlessness to cope with the definition. Yes, annals of an anguish appear in "The Chaste Wife", and at the end of "Coquette" Sally's paramour does happen to kill her husband. But as Sally cares nothing for her husband and as her paramour is getting to be an inconvenience, I assume that in the unwritten sequel Sally wore mourning for a time and administered her late husband's business with ease. She might marry a peer, even. Nor is the tragic element of "September" plain to me. I suppose that people of excessive sentimentality find woe in the sight of a thoroughly nice woman losing her lover to a gaudy flapper. The comedy of frustration has apparently no place in American culture. In fact our whole notion of comedy seems to be tainted by the notion of success. A female associated with the management of a large monthly magazine once told me that a tragic story was one in which somebody got killed or died. If our general concept of comedy is as crude as that, why, Mr. Swinnerton's plight is heartrending, and the comparative failure of his "Shops and Houses" in the United States is more easily understood.

Detachment — for which most of us hunt in vain — seems to carry a blight along with it. "Shops and Houses" is written with the least possible intrusion of Frank Swinnerton. A reasonable person might assume that Mr. Swinnerton has a keen dislike of narrow and pretentious people and that his respect for English suburban society is small. The story has no chorus. The Philistines triumph fully. A generous young man chooses to marry a grocer's daughter because he loves her, but no social wall is thrown down. Louis Vechantor and his bride simply stroll around the corner of a barrier and vanish. Given the Beckwith of Mr. Swinnerton's narrative, that is the inevitable and proper end of "Shops and Houses". But English comedies in this key have never been popular in America. On the whole we prefer the music of Lady Ursula's rattling pearls and the jolly glow of the Squire's pink coat. Outside London, the American mentally roaming English soil likes his countryside to be affable. The flavor of a better bred and better lodged Gopher Prairie flows in "Shops and Houses", and Mr. Swin-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nerton's comedic method is not broad enough for stupid people. It has been several times explained to me that this book is depressing. It may be. There are also readers who regard "The Portrait of a Lady" and "Tono-Bungay" as saddening affairs. There are also people who were harrowed by "If Winter Comes"; and when Stephen Dædalus, very drunk in the brothel of "Ulysses", saw his mother's ghost, I dare say that still other people shuddered and wept. If written art aims no deeper than to rouse the prompt emotionalism of the second rate, it gets all its deserts, and "Bubu de Montparnasse" will do for such an audience as well as "Le Curé de Tours" or "Smoke". I do not say that "Shops and Houses" is as fine a performance as "Nocturne" or "September", but its portraits are carried out to a nicety and the slow assertion of Beckwith against Louis Vechantor's intelligence is arranged without one stroke of melodrama or farce. . . . I have amused myself wondering how certain living artists would handle the theme of "Shops and Houses". Mr. Bennett — in spite of pronouncements to the contrary Mr. Bennett still seems to me an artist — Mr. Bennett would illustrate the story with some gorgeous sketch of contrasts. Mr. Wells would produce the grocer's tribe in a wider scale of observation. Mr. Walpole would fling up a jet of fancy here and there and perhaps the scene of the comedy would appear in higher color. Mr. Galsworthy's larks would sing and one of his ironic, infinitely well bred women would put in a sympathetically aristocratic word or so, but none of these things would necessarily improve the book. They would, at the best, relieve the strain on American perception.

Mr. Swinnerton's armory is handsomely stocked. He has long since got rid of woman as an heroic creature, so he writes of women without an air of profundity and quite as though they were human beings. No American, male or female, has ever quite succeeded in doing this and no American has ever written such a scene as the wooing of Alf by Emmy in "Nocturne". Mr. Swinnerton realizes, as did Henry James, that a cloudy gulf exists between minds. Unlike the Bostonian, he does not expostulate the difficulty until his characters dwindle in a haze of treatment. When his work loses force, it wanes into a sort of scientific treatise, never dull but too severe in color to match the run of his impressionism. That is the defect of some passages in "The Three Lovers" and "Shops and Houses". It is not my business to point out that Mr. Swinnerton's health has often been abominable and that the strain of composing comedies with a glass of medicine at one's elbow is great. Wilkie Collins, writhing on a couch and getting through the monstrous machinery of "The Moonstone" and "Man and Wife", is simply an annotation on the courage of an individual. Writers and prize-fighters cannot ask quarter, but illness often results in a scientific intrusion of the kind. Imagination slacks and the will goes on with the work. You may, if you can find a copy, study the matter in the amusing and forgotten "Blix" of Frank Norris. The first half of the tale moves perfectly but the last part, finished under the burden of constant coughs and chills, becomes perceptibly stiff. The phrase loses interest. The artist sinks into the ailing man. A virtuoso of Stevenson's calibre can overcome the trouble with a virtuoso's remedy.

It is sometimes complained that Mr. Swinnerton's work is "unemotional", but I am not the right person to de-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fend him against the charge. Emotionalism in fiction leads to such things as the last paragraph of "The Beast in the Jungle" and betrays superior people into enterprises such as "The Great Good Place", "Saint's Progress", "The Soul of a Bishop", "Bubu", the end of "Resurrection", and "Das hohe Lied". In his latest book, "Young Felix", Mr. Swinnerton has committed the dangerous act of portraying an emotional and rather sentimental artist. I haven't the faintest doubt that it will duly be described as a sentimental and emotional story. The world is full of wonders. A man hopelessly the prey of his emotions is very often a most engaging spectacle, nor need he be a complete ass. "Young Felix" is more openly comic in tone than "Shops and Houses" and I am curious to see the resulting criticism, especially that of admirers of "If Winter Comes". However, nobody has appointed me Mr. Swinnerton's apologist. His merits are known to the literate and I undertook this paper quite brazenly as a lame testimonial of that pleasure in rare performance which passes in me for respect.

A FORCED MUSIC

By Robert Graves

OF Love he sang, full hearted one,
But when the song was done,
The King demanded more,
Ay, and commanded more.
The boy found nothing for encore,
Words, melodies — none,
Ashamed the song's glad rise and plaintive fall
Had so charmed King and Queen and all.

He sang the same verse once again
But urging less Love's pain.
With altered time and key
He showed variety,
Seemed to refresh the harmony
Of his only strain,
So still the glad rise and the plaintive fall
Could charm the King, the Queen and all.

He of his song then wearying ceased,
But was not yet released:
The Queen's request was, "More",
And her behest was "More."
He played of random notes some score,
Then suddenly let his twangling harp down fall
And fled in tears from King and Queen and all.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE SKETCH BOOK

CANDID CRITICS

By Archibald Marshall

THE author reads a few chapters of his new novel to his assembled family.

AUTHOR: Now listen carefully, and make any criticisms that may suggest themselves to you. I'm sure you will like it: it's the best I've written so far. But I want to get it absolutely right. Anything you think is wrong, don't hesitate to say so. You are in the position of the public, and I've got to please the public.

Family puts itself into position of public. Author reads.

ELDEST DAUGHTER: I don't think she would have worn a frock exactly like that on that occasion.

AUTHOR: Well now, that's just the sort of thing you can put me right on. I wasn't quite certain about it when I wrote it. Let's get that right.

Frock discussed and settled. Family, gratified, again takes up position of public. Author prepares to resume reading. Youngest Daughter comes in.

YOUNGEST DAUGHTER *(in aggrieved voice):* Mother, you said I might have an egg for my supper. Ellen won't boil me an egg.

Situation discussed by family. Youngest Daughter asked for reasons of refusal, as stated by Ellen, who is under suspicion of "temper". Reason elicited. No eggs in house. Youngest Daughter driven out of room and told to shut door and not interrupt again. Author has taken no part in discussion, but sat with manuscript on knee and air of weary patience. Prepared to read again.

WIFE: I can't understand why there are no eggs in the house.

Question rediscussed. Author resumes air of weary patience.

WIFE: Please go on. I'm longing to know what is going to happen.

Author reads several pages, in which nothing particular happens. Family listens respectfully, but with no comment. Author hurries on to humorous dialogue, and is soon rewarded by laugh from Eldest Daughter. Author reads more brightly. Wife laughs.

SECOND DAUGHTER: Is Sir Reginald going to be funny?

AUTHOR *(brought to a sudden stop):* Why don't you listen? That's a silly question.

WIFE: Yes, it's a very silly question. Can't you see that he is meant to be funny?

Author, after a thoughtful pause, resumes reading. Family laughs frequently. Scene goes well. Author modestly gratified, and stops at the end of it to point out various excellences. Family sympathetic, but ready to go on before he is. He is about to resume reading. Youngest Daughter comes in.

YOUNGEST DAUGHTER: Mother, Ellen says I must have a bath. I had a bath this morning. I don't want a bath this evening.

Author resumes air of weary patience. Question of bath settled, and Youngest Daughter routed. Reading begins again and goes on for some time. Author pauses for comment.

ELDEST DAUGHTER *(without enthusiasm):* Jolly good, I think. But I don't quite understand why he—

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Author explains with some irritability "why he—", and says he should have thought anybody could see that. Eldest Daughter says she sees now.

SECOND DAUGHTER: Which is he going to marry?

Second Daughter snubbed by family, author keeping silence, with air of superiority. Author reads another chapter and awaits comment.

WIFE *(dutifully):* I think it is splendidly written.

ELDEST DAUGHTER: Jolly good, but—

SECOND DAUGHTER: Was it summer or winter?

AUTHOR: What a ridiculous question! Weren't they having tea out of doors?

SECOND DAUGHTER: Yes, but when he went in he burned the letter. Where did he burn it?

AUTHOR: H'm! Ha! Yes, I'm glad you pointed that out. Wouldn't do. He musn't burn it.

SECOND DAUGHTER *(encouraged):* Couldn't he burn it in the kitchen fire?

Second Daughter sat on.

ELDEST DAUGHTER: Isn't it better to make people do or say things instead of talking about them?

AUTHOR *(grudgingly):* Well, I've often told you that, of course, but here—

Goes into long explanation of why he hadn't done it.

ELDEST DAUGHTER *(courageously):* I think the whole chapter is a little dull.

Author explains carefully that whatever chapter may be, it is not dull.

WIFE: Well, perhaps you are right. Do go on. I want to know what is going to happen.

Author prepares to go on. Youngest Daughter comes in.

YOUNGEST DAUGHTER *(in voice of strong complaint):* Mother—

Youngest Daughter told that if she interrupts again she shall have a good whipping, which—as threat has often been made and never yet carried out—fails to intimidate her.

YOUNGEST DAUGHTER *(insistently):* But Mother, Ellen says—

Youngest Daughter routed, with complaint unventilated. Reading resumed.

SECOND DAUGHTER *(interrupting):* What does obsessed mean?

AUTHOR *(impatiently):* I wish you would wait until I come to the end of a passage. It means—it's plain enough what it means, from the context. Look it up in a dictionary.

SECOND DAUGHTER: I only ask because you have used it seven times on that page.

AUTHOR: Oh, well, I'll make a mark. Now I think you'll like this bit that's coming. It's rather pathetic.

Reads to end without interruption. Family quite silent. Author looks round.

AUTHOR *(not entirely destitute of humor, in hurt voice):* Well, I think you might have sobbed a bit!

WIFE *(with handkerchief to eyes):* Oh, it's beautiful!

ELDEST DAUGHTER: I could easily have cried if I had wanted to.

SECOND DAUGHTER: Could she throw herself on his breast if he was kneeling by her bed?

Effect of pathos completely spoiled. General irritation directed against Second Daughter, who sticks to point, and is pacified by promised interpolation. Youngest Daughter comes in in dressing gown.

YOUNGEST DAUGHTER: Mother, Ellen says—

Youngest Daughter once more routed with ignominy. Reading resumed.

WIFE *(at end of chapter):* Yes, it's very good. I always like your quiet, reflective bits. But—

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AUTHOR *(on defensive):* Well, what?

WIFE: I don't think it's quite as good as the rest.

Author explains that it is the best chapter in the book.

ELDEST DAUGHTER: Of course, it *is* good; but I think it hangs up the action a little.

Author explains that it is meant to hang up the action. You must have breathing space. Any sensible persons would give themselves up to a quieter mood and enjoy that chapter before getting into action again.

ELDEST DAUGHTER: Yes, perhaps so. It's awfully well written. Still, I do think it retards the action.

Author gets irritated and explains further.

SECOND DAUGHTER *(breaking in):* I don't like that chapter. I thought you were going to tell us whether she was really dead or not.

Author exhibits extreme irritation and asks whether it is worth while going on at all. Youngest Daughter comes in.

YOUNGEST DAUGHTER: Mother, Ellen says —

Youngest Daughter, fallen upon, holds ground for a moment, then bursts into howls.

YOUNGEST DAUGHTER: Ellen says — boo hoo — nearly eight o'clock — boo hoo — must lay the table.

PUTTING HUMOR INTO A NOVEL

By Homer Croy

EACH season sees any number of plays produced on Broadway that are comedies; they may vary in the amount of mirth they inspire, but all in all they are comedies. And each night the motion picture theatres bloom with pictures meant to stir the risibilities; whatever one's own reaction may be, they accomplish their desired purpose for any number of people. Almost every magazine contains at least one short story meant to make life happier, so why is it that such a long procession of novels stalk by without a smile?

It is not because we have not the humorists. We are known as a nation of humorists; our funny men are numbered by the hundreds. Scores of newspapers have their own official funny man who is hired to harp on human frailty. In fact there is an official organization of American newspaper humorists so large and flourishing that it has its annual convention at which members from all over the United States convene and talk over, no doubt, the style of spring humor as the dressmakers do that of their own particular line. The country flourishes with newspaper and magazine humorists who, given a few hours, can turn out a comparatively acceptable concoction on almost any assigned topic. There are literally hundreds of scenario writers attached to the staffs of motion picture producing companies busily conceiving humor for the movies; there are scores of paragraphers turning the day's news into tidbits; there are hundreds turning thistledown into short stories; but season after season goes by without a notable humorous novel. Surveying the field of sustained narration from a distance, it is as barren as Gobi. Six novels a day are published in this country and yet year after year goes by without a humorous novel worthy of the name appearing among the phantom caravan. Why?

Humorous books appear and when they do they are generously pro-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

claimed. But they are not novels. A "The Young Visiters" appears from time to time to become a sensation on both sides of the Atlantic, to stir to immediate action Opal Whiteley and a host of lesser prodigies; but the appearance of a humorous novel is still an event.

It is not because there is "no money in it" — usually the closing retort to a mooted question. There is nothing that pays better. One humorous novel will make its author independent. It is not because of the competition of the movies, for immediately the appearance of a successful novel is a torch in the night to the motion picture people. Often the telephone rings before the first review appears, so closely do the readers for the film company check up on current fiction. It is not because there is no demand for the humorous novel; it is not because this type is not financially a triumph. The reason goes deeper.

It digs down to psychology. Suppose a person is seized with a humorous idea; suppose he is seized with the most humorous idea in the world. Just the bare telling of it, without any of the graces of literary maturity, throws his hearers into wild and uncontrollable paroxysms of laughter. The author secludes himself, expecting to come out a Figure. In a fine frenzy he begins converting the idea to paper. At the end of his fine fever he comes out, but he has only a short story — not a novel. An incident, no matter how humorous, can hold over only a chapter or two. After the incident has completed itself — what then? Even the most ingenious of authors cannot expand a short story to thirty chapters. Ellis Parker Butler knew better than to introduce a secondary plot and a youthful love affair into "Pigs Is Pigs" and try to get two dollars for it. He kept it as it belonged — a short story.

The explanation is that a humorous idea is merely the beginning of a humorous novel. A funny short story may deal with a humorous situation, but a humorous novel is based on a humorous character. The situation grows out of the character; the character takes the lead; the situations come second.

"Huckleberry Finn" is the greatest humorous novel this country has ever produced — immeasurably superior to "Tom Sawyer", which after the first two fifths drops down into pure melodrama. All of the scenes of distinction come before the murder. After that it is pretty cheap writing. "Tom Sawyer" lives from its first early episodes and from the fact that it is a companion piece to "Huckleberry Finn". In "Huckleberry Finn" there is more than an amusing introductory; the story teems with humorous situation after humorous situation — all strung together on a line of piercing philosophy. The humorous situations are but backgrounds to show up the foibles and shortcomings of human nature.

The plot for a humorous story may be told to any competent literary craftsman and be made into an acceptable product, but the plot of a humorous novel means nothing except to the one person who gives it his philosophy and his soul. Short story writers are constantly accused of stealing each other's plots and go to lengths to guard their ideas. But the author of a humorous novel can publish the scenario of his story in the daily papers and then go contentedly to his study with never a fear that it will be filched from him. The story will live only when it bears his interpretation of character and breathes his personality. If the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

author hasn't something more than the situations, he has no book. The person who starts out to write a humorous novel has sawed the limb off before he begins. The humor of a novel is the seasoning; it is never the bill of fare.

All of the outstanding American humorous novels are primarily those of character: Huckleberry Finn, David Harum, Mrs. Wiggs, and Willie Baxter in "Seventeen". It is difficult to recall the plots in these novels, but the characters are as real as many we have known in a less fanciful world. In humorous short stories, such as O. Henry's, the plot is all in all. Personally, I consider "Huckleberry Finn", "Seventeen", and "The Real Diary of a Real Boy" the three most humorous books written in America — and "Seventeen" is a novel only by a narrow squeak, while the latter is not a novel in any sense.

It is strange that among so many of our novelists — and eminently successful ones — little or no humor exists. Never in my reading of Zane Grey have I come across anything that I couldn't read in a club car without arousing the distrust of my fellow passengers; and never but once in reading Theodore Dreiser have I laughed — and that at his study of Muldoon in one of his essays. It is a pity that such men, with their distinct character portrayal and their command of situation, should never be able to put tongue in cheek.

With all our wealth of humorists it would seem that a dependable number of humorous novels ought to come each season, but it is not so. Of Ring W. Lardner, Don Marquis, Irvin S. Cobb, Edgar A. Guest, Oliver Herford, Franklin P. Adams, H. C. Witwer, Stephen Leacock, Gelett Burgess, George Ade, Wallace Irwin, Heywood Broun, Thomas L. Masson, and Ellis Parker Butler, not one has written a humorous novel.

The only writers who can be counted on to turn out a humorous novel of parts are Harry Leon Wilson, Joe Lincoln, and Booth Tarkington.

ON THE CATHEDRAL AT SEVILLE AND "THE MISANTHROPE"

By Hilaire Belloc

I, WITHIN one week, experienced, felt, saw and handled, as it were, with my mind, the two chief creations of the human spirit: a marvelous piece of luck. I heard mass in Seville Cathedral on a Sunday. The Sunday after I sat at the Français marveling at "The Misanthrope". These two creations, the one in stone, the other in the verb, are, so far as I know, the summit of our European creative power, and therefore of the world. They praise the Giralda of Seville, the great tower outside the Cathedral, and they are right. But they are wrong when they praise it with a more or less conscious motive of crying up Islam and running down their own blood. The beauty of the Giralda is not an Islamic beauty, though Islam built the most of it. It is what it is because Europe repairs and finishes. If you doubt this you may go and look at that twin tower of Hassan on the Hill above Rabat in Morocco. That huge brown tower at Rabat looks over the Atlantic Seas toward its sister, the Giralda: imperfect thing looking at a perfected thing. A thing essentially weak because not permanent, looking at a symbol of permanence: a thing destined to ruin looking at a thing destined to life. And I say in the maugre of the teeth of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

those with whom I disagree that the Giralda would not be the Giralda but for its Christian cap. However, there it stands, useful at least as a contrast. For if the Giralda be very beautiful (as it is), what is it compared to the Cathedral itself? That building can never be excelled. Our race once, in one great moment of three centuries, reached its highest level. We shall hardly return to such a summit. The Gallic spirit had created the Gothic; the unfathomed suggestion of the hands in prayer and of the uplifted arch of sixty degrees, had spread from Paris outward; it had built all the ring of great shrines—Chartres, Beauvais, Amiens, Rheims. It was proceeding in outer circles to Britain, and even to the Rhine and beyond, and on through the Reconquista, southward, shooting up Burgos like a fire, and planting the nobility of Oviedo and Leone, when the Christian Cavalry entered Seville and began the last and the noblest of all those things.

What a mood of making, what an enlarging passion to produce and to form and to express must have possessed the men who through those centuries completed that thing! From the thirteenth century to the *Reyes Catolicos* it is everything from St. Ferdinand to Ferdinand and Isabel.

Castille rode in and made this marvelous thing. I wonder what Aragon would have done. Often, as I have gone down the banks of that torrent, which is also a god, and which gave its name to the mighty kingdom, often, as I have gone down the gorge of the Pyrenees with the Aragon tumbling at my side, I have meditated upon its spirit, broader, I think, less piercing, with more grasp, less thrust than the chivalry to the west, than the raiders of Castille. Suffused, I think, with the Catalan blood, though they would hate to be told it, and in some way at once less solemn and yet more solid. Aragon had no chance. It was blocked. It was Castille that rode in and made this thing. And in making it, it made the greatest monument which our race can boast.

There is some unexplained power in proportion which not only symbolizes, not only suggests, but actually presents that which has no proportions, the illimitable vastness — eternity. There is a mystery about just proportion. It has this magic about it. It will express both the sublime and the merely just, the merely accurate. It will suggest repose, it will suggest a disdainful superiority to inferior things. It carries a patent of nobility always. But in rare times and places it can also effect what I have said—a vision of the eternal.

A man in the Cathedral of Seville understands the end of his being. He is, while standing there on earth, surrounded by stones and rocks of the earth, with his own body in decay and all about him in decay—he is in the midst of all this material affair, in a side manner out of it all, in possession of the last truth. Nowhere else in the world that I know of has the illimitable finally fixed itself in expression. And it is not only proportion—it is also multiplicity. It is not only that factor of true creative power, the making it something more than that which you make through an instinct for form; it is also the other factor of creative power — diversity, endless breeding, burgeoning, foison, which everywhere clothes this amazing result. Seville has not (for its area, its great space) the actual number of carven things which glorify Brou and the Jewel of the House of Savoy. It has not perhaps any one statue which will match the immortal Magdalen of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Brou or the new German (to my astonishment!) little sandstone Madonna of Trèves, nor that other Madonna praying to her own self, which for a long time I believed to be the loveliest figure in the world. I mean the one over the southern porch of Rheims (Prussian ineptitude has spared it and it still remains). But if Seville has not some one statue, it has the effect of multiplicity more greatly developed than any other building I know, and here again you will ask yourself in vain, as the creators themselves would have asked themselves in vain, how that effect arose. It is so, and there stands Seville. If you would know how silence can be full and how a supreme unity can be infinitely diverse, if you would touch all the mysteries, and comprehend them as well as they can be comprehended within the limits of our little passage through the daylight, you must see Seville. But do not go there in Holy Week.

And "The Misanthrope".

The supreme art of words is the production of multiple and profound effect coupled with simplicity in construction. There is hardly in this masterpiece one phrase which is not the phrase of convention or of daily use. Where the words are not the words that men used, nor the sentences the sentences they used at the Court of Louis XIV, then they are the words conventionally used in the heroic couplets of that day. And each character has so much to say (not very much), and there is, you may say, no rhetoric, and there is, you may say, no lyric, no deliberate poignancy; one might by paradox go further and say no effect, meaning by *effect* a sudden, sharp, contrasted effect. This comedy of Molière's represents no more than the simplest conjunction, the everyday business of a man who expects too much of mankind, who is in love and expects too much of the lady, who has a friend, a man, and another friend, a woman, who would marry him willingly enough if he only would, and who yet advises quietly and is more a support than a lover. And there is hardly any plot, merely the discovery that the young widow for whom the Misanthrope feels such passion is a chatterbox and runs her friends down behind their backs for the sake of chat. There is the fatuous bad poet, there are the silly men of the world. These are the materials, and into them a man who was not, I think, of the very first rank in the matter of art, did once breathe such life that he made a thing standing quite apart from all his other creations and above all that not only his contemporaries, but any other, had accomplished. What depths and further depths, what suggestions to the left and to the right, what infinite complexity of real character (and just as infinite complexity of real character exists in all of us) shine through those few pages, illumine and glorify two hours of acting on a stage! There is perhaps no man intelligent and sensitive who has reached the age of forty, who will not, as he watches the acting of "The Misanthrope", see all that he knows of life passing before him and sounding exactly in tune with the vibrations of his own soul. There is love intense and disappointed, and there is the foil, that large, that honest, that domestic thing which rare women possess and when they possess it afford food, sustenance, sacrament to the life of men. There is friendship, there is the ideal sought and unattained, the disappointment which comes to all nobility.

There is here all human character put into a little frame. How? No one

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

can tell how. Molière himself could not have told how. When those simple words, spoken quickly and in a low tone — *"Faut-il que je vous aime?"* — are heard, the hearer's whole self, his whole past (if he has loved fully), his security, his doubt, all of him respond. Why? I cannot tell. I only know that the great poets do it, and they themselves do not know how. It is the muse. It is something divine. It is inspiration. That word was justly framed. It would seem that among the solutions afforded to the miserable race of men, among the little hints of a possible coming Beatitude, the Creator has especially chosen from the storehouse this gem, this priceless gem of poetical power.

I am reminded of it when I read the foolish judgment so often repeated— that the Ancients had no landscape.

Θήσουσ' ἐν Λυκίης εὐρείης πίονι δήμῳ
Iliad: XVI — 673

When I read that I see what I think Flaxman saw, the sunlight, the Ægean, the Asian hills, and the fertile plain; and I feel the warmer air. Yet, is there not one word which describes these things, unless you except the common word and symbol which says that Lycia is rich. Tennyson did it too: "And the moon was full." So did Byron: "The moon is up and yet it is not night." So did they all. But Molière in "The Misanthrope" did it all the time. It is not single lines (though I have quoted one); it is the whole river of the thing, high in flood, up to the top of its banks, majestic, and upon a scale to which one would have thought mere man could not build. All that!

For two hours, hearing this thing, I was quite outside the world. And the memory of it is a possession which should endure, I think, forever, by which word I mean even beyond the limitations of this life; but therein I may be wrong.

THE WRECK

By John Gould Fletcher

AMID the immense broad brownness of the sands
Where water, wind, and solitude join hands;
From a sunken pool, the blackened side
Of a buried ship sticks out at low tide.
The soaked and rotting curve of prow
Points seaward, and the old sea now
Growls still as harsh and hungrily
As when this derelict rode the sea.
Men in some century to come
May go a-grubbing in dry land
And find some bolts of iron; a hand
May hold them and a mouth be dumb.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE LITERARY SPOTLIGHT

XXV: AMY LOWELL

With a Caricature by William Gropper

AMY LOWELL towers above most contemporary versifiers like a sort of nineteenth century Savonarola, exhorting them to beware the pitfalls of sin and the ways of the devil. She is the sternest of puritans; but over her grey sense of duty she wears a multitude of jewels. She wreathes herself in flowers, exotic colors flame from her hair, and while she consigns lust to the bonfire she makes sure that both lust and the bonfire are attractively tricked out with pretty words. Probably no great woman ever so successfully concealed herself by elaborate trappings. The poetical Miss Lowell reminds me occasionally of a wholehearted and beautiful dowager who, afraid that her own person will fail to charm, hedges herself about with silks and satins, perfumes, flowers, jewels, and clanking metals, until she seems a veritable museum of *objets d'art*, and the real woman beneath, fine and true as she is, becomes discernible only to those who are patient enough to look and to wait. The genius of Miss Lowell is based on a conflict — it is the quarrel of New England conservatism with an almost pagan love of the beautiful — and the result is, naturally enough, a firm code of denial, of duty in the strictest sense.

I do not purpose to ridicule Amy Lowell in these paragraphs, nor to belittle her literary powers. Anyone so vital as she is, so tremendously active, gives broad chance for the cheap journalist and punster to indulge himself in comic regard. All her life she has been subject for such attacks; but those who have attacked her have not retired unscathed. In 1914 she was limned by "Town Topics" which said, among other vicious things: "It is reported that the Macmillans will publish a book of Miss Lowell's verses. Poor old Boston." F.P.A., from his scornful heights of colyumny, parodied her again and again and even resorted to personal jibes. It was not the real poets, however, nor the real critics who bombarded her with criticism. It was the little versifiers and wits, who found the marching cadences of Miss Lowell's verses and the virile rush of her imagination easy to parody and to criticize. The firm quality of her work can be judged easily from the list of her critics. Radicals like Max Eastman attacked her, yet in 1915 W. D. Howells gave her high praise. Professor John Erskine and J. C. Squire still look askance at her, yet in 1921 even H. L. Mencken admitted grudgingly that she had "undoubted talents". Clement Shorter compared her to Dr. Johnson as the "unacknowledged head of Literary America". In 1913 Louis Untermeyer referred to her slightingly, but he has since paid her many glowing tributes. Her championship of the imagists brought down showers of controversy about her, which she weathered with little apparent effort.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

That she actually likes a good argument there is no doubt; but her hates are more intellectual than personal, and her raillery is most often leveled at dunderheads and dodos. She is forever sweeping out dusty minds, and her broom is more vigorous than cruel.

Miss Lowell has published six volumes of her own poetry. Two critical books, adaptations of Chinese translations and of two French operettas, critical pieces, and essays form the enormous body of her work. Before me now, in uniform size and with bright gemlike bindings, lies the complete set of her poems. After rereading them all I confess myself thoroughly humbled. There has never lived a woman poet of such range, versatility, and power. She reminds one of Byron or of Browning. I am convinced that future time will find in her one of the literary giants of our time, and that, in spite of her overpowering personality, she will be known for her *poetry*. I know of only one way of phrasing my belief. She is a great poet.

Consider the poems. They range from the delicate, sometimes trite lyrics of "A Dome of Many-Coloured Glass" to the passionate virtuosity of "Can Grande's Castle" and the more closely knit dramas of "Legends". There are pieces as fragile and as finely wrought as Italian glass. Pieces like the serene and musical "Patience" or "Madonna of the Evening Flowers" or "White and Green":

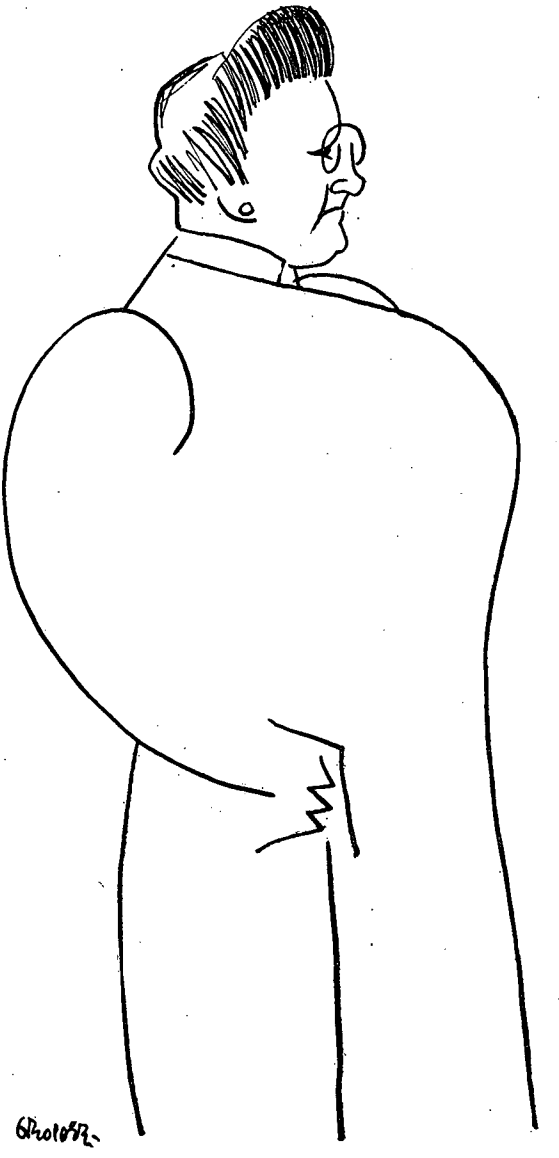
Hey! My daffodil-crowned;
Slim and without sandals!
As the sudden spurt of flame upon darkness
So my eyeballs are startled with you,
Supple-limbed youth among the fruit-trees,
Light runner through tasselled orchards.
You are an almond flower unsheathed,
Leaping and flickering between the budding
branches.

There are pieces of atmospheric description that startle by their trueness and glow with imagery. Turn to "Motor Lights on a Hill Road", or "Before the Storm". There is humor, even in such grim New England tragedies as those Yankee dialect poems in "The Overgrown Pasture". There is the perhaps more characteristic drama of "Patterns", of "The Cremona Violin", of "The Cross-Roads"; and, most important of all, Miss Lowell's imaginative grasp of historical events, her linking of them to human passion as in the epical "Bronze Horses" or that great portrait of Lady Hamilton, "Sea-Blue and Blood-Red". She sees often not one country but several, and their contrasted events of the same epoch.

Are these six books, these hundreds of poems, and the many others known to be in existence but still unpublished, the unrelated effusions of a vigorous mind and a prolific pen, or are they related by some deep philosophy of life? To me Miss Lowell, in even firmer accents than Robert Frost or than Stuart Pratt Sherman, is preaching the philosophy of puritanism and is at the same time, especially in her earlier volumes, longing to escape from it. This regard for morality, this stern preaching of duty, this conviction that moral laws infringed lead only to punishment by nature or by God, is evident in every one of her books. I do not think that she has been unaware of her doctrines; but I fancy she has not realized how much of a propagandist for them she is. In her early work she was quite unashamed. She spoke occasionally almost with the accents of Gipsy Smith or Billy Sunday. In "Azure and Gold" we find a trite stanza that might come almost from a Y. M. C. A. hymn book:

Centre Stone of the Crown of the World,
"Sincerity" graved on your youth!
And your eyes hold the blue-bird flash,
The sapphire shaft, which is truth.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Amy Lowell

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Here is philosophy concealed by no Maeterlinckian gauzes. Again we have it in "Fatigue":

> Dower me with strength and curb all foolish eagerness —
> The law exacts obedience. Instruct, I will conform.

She doesn't particularly wish to conform, mind you; but *she will!*

Over and over in the dramatic poems the story reiterates this idea of retribution for sin or dalliance. "The Great Adventure of Max Breuck" has it — Max loses all that is best to him in life because he tarries a moment by the way. Paul Jannes in "The Shadow" is turned from the pathway of sanity by his absorption in a shadow on his wall, the image of his own desire, the image from which he cannot escape. Lady Hamilton and Nelson are victims of their passion. Their tragedy is the most moving in "Can Grande's Castle". In "Guns as Keys: and the Great Gate Swings" Admiral Perry seizes on and opens to the world the mysteries of Japan — but what will be the consequences, Miss Lowell asks:

> Occident — Orient — after fifty years.

In "A Tale of Starvation" the old man gives up life in his quest for the beautiful and, as he finds, the foolish. Napoleon is a figure which appeals to Miss Lowell as a symbol of lofty ambition brought low. In "Hammers" she paints him magnificently.

Unfaithfulness, adultery, she again and again uses as the theme for grim tragedy: in "Pickthorn Manor", in "The Cremona Violin", in "Reaping", in "The Ring and the Castle", and others. Along with this is the other motif, the longing for escape, the desire to flee from the standards that life imposes. In the early books she feels this more keenly. Twice, she compares this mood to a pathway, leading somewhere. Where? In "The Way" she sees

> . . . spanning the river a bridge, frail promise to longing desire

and in "A Coloured Print by Shokei"—

> For it must lead to a happy land,
> This little path by a waterfall spanned.

Even more definitely personal she repeats this longing for change in "The Starling".

> I weary for desires never guessed,
> For alien passions, strange imaginings,
> To be some other person for a day.

In her latest volumes her philosophy of retributive justice is thoroughly crystallized. With the exception of two pieces of purely descriptive writing, all of the verses in "Legends" are on the one theme. "Memorandum Confided by a Yucca to a Passion-Vine" is the story of the fox who was desirous of the moon, and the consequences of his fearful quest. Says the fox:

> "And I have come here to drink this poison and die."

"A Legend of Porcelain" is the story of expiation for sin —

> Snared by beauty, she permitted her august father's house to go unguarded.

"Many Swans", an Indian variant of the Prometheus story, tells how "Many Swans" desired the possession of a gift of Heaven against which fate had warned him and which, then, accomplished the destruction of himself and his people.

> "The thing I wanted is bad", but he had the thing and he could not part from it.

"Witch-Woman" is the bizarre story of evil love —

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

These kisses shot with poison,
These thoughts cutting me like red knives.

"The Ring and the Castle" is a terrifying study of insanity and murder resulting from adulterous love:

"Benjamin Bailey, Benjamin Bailey, sinners repent when they come to die."

"The Statue in the Garden" is not unlike "The Shadow" in its symbolism — a man is again absorbed in a concrete image of ideal beauty or love, and is pursued by this image.

In the vivid and almost brutal "Dried Marjoram", a mother tries to expiate her son's sin. "Before the Storm" is the legend of old Peter Rugg who is trying to find his destination through the ages — it is perhaps humorous that the object of the search is in this case not love nor beauty — but *Boston!* "Four Sides to a House" is a story of revenge, and of the ultimate disaster which a murdered man brings upon his murderers. There it is! Take it for what you will — obsession or philosophy — it is the secret of Miss Lowell's work; and yet, and yet, though she shrinks from seizing the object of desire, though she shows the retribution that inevitably follows, she admires those who seize it.

There is not so much of the prude in Miss Lowell as I may appear to think. She does not say, "Don't! Don't! Don't!" She simply sees with terrible clarity what is likely to happen to you if you do. She cannot bring herself to believe that happiness ever follows fulfilled desire. It is destruction to "follow your instincts". Napoleon fires her imagination. "Impudent! Audacious! But, by Jove, he blinds the eyes!" And for John Keats, who is almost her greatest hero, she has a wistful regard — he found beauty and seized it, in spite of all.

Now comes a sprig little gentleman,
And turns over your manuscript with his mincing fingers,
And tabulates places and dates.
He says your moon was a copy-book maxim,
And talks about the spirit of solitude,
And the salvation of genius through the social order.
I wish you were here to damn him
With a good, round, agreeable oath, John Keats,
But just snap your fingers,
You and the moon will still love,
When he and his papers have slithered away
In the bodies of innumerable worms.

Miss Lowell's own life has been fulfilled by the most rigorous discipline. Ever since she undertook to write poetry, she has made its creation, its entertainment, and its criticism her entire existence. She spends at least half her days in one of the most beautiful private libraries in the world — her own. Her life is organized for literature and is arranged to meet the demands made of it by the instinct to create! She understands *life* thoroughly; but she is afraid of it. She has spent her whole poetical career in disciplining her emotions. It is her mind only that wanders far afield. She has more intellectual curiosity than any other woman I have ever known. If she were a man, she would probably employ the best athletic trainer in the country to keep her in shape for her greatly varied tasks, tasks which she imposes on herself, like "The Life of John Keats". These tasks are exacting and worth while, and in accomplishing them she never pauses midway. She has been known to read hundreds of reference books to obtain the atmosphere for one poem. If you should tell her that she could have achieved the same effect with less use of accurate detail, she would give you the retort courteous that a poem, to be a poem to her, must be intellectually satisfying; that half truths do not satisfy her.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Although she is constantly picturing the downfall of arrogant power, she is herself an aristocrat of no mean positivity. While she recognizes the worth of democracy, beauty, to her, is possible only through the refinements of life. She is intolerant; but, in the main, of one thing only — stupidity. Her mind works with almost miraculous rapidity. Those who arrive at conclusions more slowly, often find themselves lost in the maze of her questioning. She occasionally forgets that conclusions reached more slowly may be quite as sound.

Her thirst for constructive thinking has made necessary her critical writings and her interest in the spread of enthusiasm for poetics. It is the same interest that prompts her to devour practically all of the new detective novels. It is the same instinct which led her to undertake the writing of a biography — which is, after all, the detection and reconstruction of a series of facts grouped around a working theory — then a proof of that theory by a proper presentation of the facts.

Her enemies — and she has many — are mostly those who resent her intolerance of intellectual sloppiness and her strong sense of moral values. She attends many banquets and her presence is often the cause of a torrent of disagreement.

What are her critical opinions of her contemporaries? You may find them in "Tendencies in Modern American Poetry" or, better still, in the anonymous "A Critical Fable", a pamphlet written in the tradition of Miss Lowell's greatuncle's "A Fable for Critics". In this are recorded her latest critical ideas. She denies that she wrote the screed, and for present purposes I accept the denial. Nevertheless, its dicta are from the oracle of Brookline — her sibylline accents breathe through its pages. It is thoroughly in the Amy Lowell tradition. Its author has sat before the Lowell hearth and has heard the flow of brittle wisdom that greets the crackling flames and assaults the orchids from the Lowell greenhouses. Yes — it is as much in the Lowell tradition as are the family heirlooms and the orchids.

Her imagery, careful, direct, vivid according to the imagist creed, occasionally takes the breath away by its strangeness. She tends to choose a hard image for representing soft things. She is forever comparing people to flowers, natural objects to jewels —

> . . . and one Rubens dame,
> A peony just burst out,
> With flaunting crimson flesh.

or

> The notes rose into the wild sun-mote
> Which slanted through the window.
> They lay like coloured beads a-row,
> They knocked together and parted,
> And started to dance . . .

Her style is varied and practically always musical. For one who has been noted for her championship of free rhythms, she is remarkably devoted to form. Even her poems which at first reading seem chaotic gain in structural roundness as they are studied. She has molded her mind carefully to the pattern she desires, and it is according to this pattern that her poetry is made. Her rhythms vary from the boom and surge of polyphonic prose such as we find in the memorable close of "The Bronze Horses" —

> The boat draws away from the Riva. The great bronze horses mingle their outlines with the distant mountains. Dim gold, subdued green-gold, flashing faintly to the faint, bright peaks above them. Granite and metal, earth over water. Down the canal, old, beautiful horses, pride of Venice, of Constantinople, of Rome. Wars bite you with their little flames and pass away, but roses

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and oleanders strew their petals before your going, and you move like a constellation in a space of crimson stars.

So the horses float along the canal, between barred and shuttered palaces, splendid against marble walls in the fire of the sun.

— to lilting delicacies such as the following:

It is Chou-Kiou who paints the fighting crickets
On the egg-shell cups;
Who covers the Wa-Wa cups
With little bully boys;
Who sketches Manchu ladies, Tartar ladies,
Chasing crimson butterflies with faint silk fans,
On the slim teapots of young bamboo.
Chou-Kiou,
Bustling all day between the kilns and the warehouses.
A breath of peach-bloom silk
Turning a pathway —
Puff! She is gone,
As a peach-blossom painted on paper
Caught in a corner of the wind.

This suiting of mood and story to rhythm is characteristic of Miss Lowell and is one of her greatest gifts as a poet.

Her best work is her latest. In a certain sense she will probably never surpass the vision and the execution of "Can Grande's Castle", but in "Legends" and in new poems not yet gathered in book form, she exhibits a smoothness and a dramatic fervor greater than in any previous work. She gives way with infrequency to the sharp, muted, and sometimes inept phrases which marred many early poems. She has not written so thoroughly prosaic a piece as "The Forsaken" in many years — nor do we now find such unfortunate couplets as

And fragrant as fir-trees are
When breezes in their needles jar.

Her later style is fluid and gracile, the thought deeper, the dream clearer. She deals with life more directly, as if she had suddenly come to understand both herself and the world better and was no longer afraid to speak boldly and truly. She puts down the veil. She comes out from her harem of fretwork and jewels, from her passionate absorption in gardens, from her wayward habit of being distracted from the point by the sudden sight and smell of flowers. She speaks with accents which are at the same time firm and beautiful. So great is the vitality possessed by her, that this progress has been possible. Heaven grant that she will use all her energy from now on in creating poetry and criticisms and in delivering her fervid lectures, that she may not again feel that literature and life require her to propagate a "school" of poetry or nourish another flock of poets. No matter how great her influence may have been in producing the new poetry in America, she has never furthered a poet greater than herself; and to herself, rather than to Johnny Jones or even John Keats, she should turn the efforts of what should prove her most productive years — the next ten!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE LONDONER

Christmas Again---Malthusianism in the Publishing Trade---The Nonesuch Press---"Tantalus"---Mark Rutherford---H. W. and H. J. Massingham---Compton Mackenzie and the Gramophone---Cuts in a Novel.

LONDON, *November* 1, 1923.

SO we are coming round again to Christmas, and the publishers are once more hoping that the season will make up for all the disappointments of the earlier months of this mediocre year. That they will have less than the fortune they desire I do not doubt, for the true way to revive the book world is to be found in the publication of good books, a consideration too often lost sight of by the majority of publishers in England. One of these recently gave as a reason for a distended list that if he did not publish the books somebody else would. Nothing could be more desolating to the book lover than such a justification of manufacture. It puts the legitimacy of the publishing trade at its very lowest value. Yet the passion for mass production is growing. Not good books, but many books — make the successes pay for the losses, and let there be plenty of books as an insurance of turnover — is the cry. That it is a form of suicide seems to me to be beyond question, but there it is. To my mind the only way of making the publishing business pay, of making it again reputable, is to introduce a sort of Malthusianism into its councils. The idea was elaborately worked out some years ago by P. P. Howe, author of the recent "Life of William Hazlitt", in a pamphlet called "Malthus and the Publishing Trade". More and better selection, if it led to less huge businesses, would yet make for a tremendous economy of energy and expense. As it is, the present method creates a big organization which must be kept up year after year, whatever the quality of the books available; and we are accordingly deluged with the most wretched successions of books which are no books. What wonder that readers pay no attention to the press, when they are confronted each week with so many pages of comment upon so many new and undistinguishable books the titles of which are forgotten by the following morning. A book now has as much permanence in the popular mind as a police court case which is noticed one evening and immediately replaced in news interest by some other police court case. Not as much indeed, for the books are so many that most of them do not get reviewed at all.

* * * *

However, what sort of talk is this for the Christmas season? No publisher will take a moment's notice of what I say. He will put my complaints down to dyspepsia or some sort of personal chagrin, and will proceed to make up his lists for next year with unabated energy. His mills must grind, his abortions be foisted upon the world, lest he fall behind his competitors in the race for all the newest and most profitable books. And the publisher's conviction is perfectly natural, and has its excuse. If he does not get the books

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he will cut no figure at all in the publishing world. He will be shouldered out by the others, and so he must strive with the rest of them, and if he cannot get good books must be content with those less good, since the habit of waiting for good books alone nowadays converts publishing into a wealthy man's hobby. Few publishers are rich enough in capital to indulge themselves thus. Besides, what is a good book? It is hard to say, when there are so many books which are half good. It is far easier to say what is not good, and one can by doing this maintain a higher degree of intellectual superiority to one's fellows. In any case, the diversity of judgment is extraordinary. As an example, take "Lady into Fox". H. G. Wells read this book, and wrote post haste to the editor of "The Adelphi" saying how fine it was, and how the wicked reviewers as usual had failed to discern its merits (this in spite of the fact that the press gave much space and considerable enthusiasm to "Lady into Fox" while Wells was busy with some other subject). The following month the editor of "The Adelphi" went out of his way to attack "Lady into Fox" and to say that it was without æsthetic and creative importance. Personally I think both of these critics at fault over the book, which, by the way, has just been given another prize — the James Tait Black. They seem to me both half right. That is, I think "Lady into Fox" is the work of an exceptional talent, and a remarkable book at that; while at the same time I agree that it is not in the strict sense "creative". Unfortunately neither Wells nor Murry made a serious attempt to appraise the book's significance at the present time, this significance being enormous. They both roared. Much worse, they were led to adopt an attitude to it for reasons other than the purely æsthetic. What Wells said was an attack (in this case without reasonable foundation) upon the negligence of reviewers; while Middleton Murry's opinion, since repeated in a letter to "The Literary Review", seemed to arise less from native condemnation of the book than from a species of indignation with some newspaper critic's praise of "Lady into Fox" at the expense of "The Adelphi". The reviewer said that "Lady into Fox" indicated a revival in the classic style, while "The Adelphi" was the last gasp of romanticism. And so the critics disagree. It is easy for the looker on to know better than the combatants, and I have no intention of prolonging discussion upon this particular book. The present reference is merely illustrative. It relates to the question, "What is a good book?" As well ask, "What is truth?" as Pilate did. The answer in each case is so much volubly expressed prejudice. Æsthetic experts may talk as they will of principles. Watch the little fellows at work applying their principles, and see what a jumble they make. I have for a long time thought, with the Philistine, that principles are created to fit tastes; and that the more they are paraded the narrower are the critic's sympathies. On the face of it, although such a conclusion may be merely facile, I feel that a book which arouses divergent views must at least have quality. Who touches such a book, that is, touches a man; and we all know how sensitive we are to likes and dislikes of another man's personality. Few people, other than artists, have the gift of appraising work with which personally they are out of sympathy.

* * * *

The author of "Lady into Fox" has been doing something besides writing

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that book and its successor, "The Man in the Zoo". He and his partners in the firm of Birrell and Garnett appear to have ventured into the field of book publishing for collectors and investors. That is, they have founded what is called the Nonesuch Press. This modestly named enterprise specializes in finely produced reprints, all of which so far have been issued in limited editions, and all of which have achieved success — that success which is marked by the sale to the bookselling trade of all the copies printed of a small edition of any book. There is no great profit to be made by the publication of such luxurious works, because the expenses of production are generally pretty heavy and the number of those who buy for love or in anticipation of a rise in price (as an investment) is severely limited; but there is great delight to be derived by the man of taste and scholarship from the manufacture of a beautiful book the contents of which, if not always the finest literature, are at least marked by distinction or rarity. The Nonesuch Press has already published reprints of "The Book of Ruth", the poems of Andrew Marvell, and the love poems of John Donne; and it has further been fortunate in being able to print for the first time the letters of George Meredith to Alice Meynell. These books, all of which are no longer obtainable except by the expenditure of trouble and money, are to be followed during the present season by two further reprints of Donne, a couple of seventeenth century translations from the classics, a very impressive collection of Congreve's complete works (all copies of which have been sold to the trade before publication), Aldington's translation of "Cupid and Psyche", and, as a modern publication to stand alongside the Meredith letters, some letters of W. H. Hudson to Edward Garnett, which are said to be a hundred and thirty in number and which are probably of considerable personal and literary interest. Edward Garnett and W. H. Hudson were staunch friends and companions, and these letters are sure to be very characteristic of the great naturalist.

* * * *

A novel which I have lately read with a good deal of interest and admiration is "Tantalus", by Dorothy Easton. The author published a couple of years ago a volume of sensitive sketches which had an introduction by her uncle, John Galsworthy. This new story, which is quite short, has something of the Galsworthy manner in its descriptions, and is a fine study in atmosphere. It is the picture of a clergyman with a wife and grown up family, who falls in love with a French governess who comes to the house with the children of a relative. The love story is almost platonic in degree, and yet it is discovered and made the cause of intolerable family supervision. As will be seen from this summary, the book makes calls upon the author's skill. Miss Easton answers to the calls in a very distinguished manner. She does not, it is true, make us feel with her clergyman to the extent of identifying ourselves entirely with him. Nor does she quite convince us with her governess. But apart from these failures — to call them failures is practically to suggest that success was possible, which perhaps it is not — the book has genuine value as a careful drawing. It has many charming and convincing descriptions, written with sensitiveness and understanding; and in the sense that it puts a case which holds our interest and evokes our respect it is remarkable. Curiously enough, the manuscript of "Tantalus"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

had a checkered career before it went to the printers. In that respect it is not unlike the manuscripts of some other books which have been of noteworthy merit. But when at last it was on the way to completion, after much ill health and personal difficulty on the part of the author, this particular manuscript was for a few moments left lying at the foot of a large and excellently shady tree. Its whiteness — one must assume — shone far and wide. To the spot hastened all the pigs upon the farm on which Miss Easton lives. The pigs saw the manuscript, sniffed, snuffed — and began to eat it!

* * * *

A couple of months ago I referred here to the new edition of the novels of Mark Rutherford which was to be published by Fisher Unwin. My paragraph expressed regret that the "Pages from a Journal" had not been included in the new edition, and added, rather vaguely, that this book had been published some years ago by one of the University presses. My paragraph gave the impression that I thought the book was out of print, which I did not intend; but if every ambiguity of mine had reward so handsome these monthly pages in THE BOOKMAN would be continuously vague, for I am now the possessor of four books which I shall always prize. Humphrey Milford, the manager of the Oxford University Press, and a brother-in-law of Mark Rutherford (William Hale White), reminds me in the most charming way that "Pages from a Journal", "More Pages from a Journal", and "Last Pages from a Journal" are all published by the Oxford University Press; and he draws my attention to a little book of which I had never even heard, "The Early Life of Mark Rutherford" (by himself). All four books are full of beauty. Mark Rutherford had a fine spirit, and just as his novels are distinguished by their nobility of understanding and the beauty of their sensitiveness to life, so are these little "Pages from a Journal". The author wrote one of the purest and best prose styles I know. It was the fit emblem of his nature. Apart from some singular timidity which one sees in all his work, and which, in that fine novel (which would not please the mandarins in the matter of form) "The Revolution in Tanner's Lane", leads to a sort of hostility to one or two of the characters, Mark Rutherford had that most profound of all the novelist's gifts, humaneness, in the highest degree. His canvases were small, and the life which they depicted was often narrow. At times, minor characters failed quite to hold the eye. But the simplicity with which — in say "The Early Life", "The Autobiography", and "The Deliverance", and most strongly of all in "The Revolution in Tanner's Lane" — he draws the spirit of the first half of the nineteenth century in England is incomparable. There is a picture toward the end of "The Revolution in Tanner's Lane" of a village off the London-York road, of its inhabitants, and of its moral atmosphere, which I know of nothing in the same line to beat. I think Mark Rutherford's weakness was in the hatred of evil. He disliked the evil characters which he was compelled to draw, and his illustrations of their weaknesses do not therefore quite convince us. He does not seem to have had any very first hand knowledge of the things that wicked folk really do. On the other hand, his good people, unlike the good people in almost all English novels, are most delightful. They live, they please us, they are interesting. Can such things be?

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Equally in the three volumes of the "Journal", which everybody who cares for humane letters should possess for the sake of their beauty and their simplicity, there is the same goodness (without priggishness) and love of goodness. There is the same justice of temperament. There is the same extraordinary verbal beauty, which rises naturally from the writer's personality. It is free from all flowers, a simple unadorned style, flexible and unmannered, and its virtue and sobriety are not to be withstood. There is to be a volume of "Letters" in the spring to which I and all lovers of Hale White will look forward with the deepest interest. Meanwhile, there is H. W. Massingham's essay, prefixed to the new Fisher Unwin edition of the novels, to read.

* * * *

I see, by the way, speaking of Massingham, that some confusion has arisen in the mind of the excellent Kenelm Digby between H. W. Massingham and H. J. Massingham. There is always the difficulty which A. A. Milne's Belinda found with Thursday which is today and Thursday which is next week — that both have the same name. But the two men should not be confused. H. W. is the father of H. J. Otherwise no two writers could be less alike. H. W. is the late editor of "The Nation", and writes as "Wayfarer" in "The New Statesman". It is reported that he is to write a book describing the causes in which he has been interested at different periods of his life; but I shall believe in the book's existence when I see it. H. W. was at one time editor of the "Daily Chronicle", and during the period of his editorship the paper reached a higher level of literary quality than it is known ever to have attained since. It actually was in those days a literary daily newspaper. The thought seems incredible at the present time, when, faced with the need for economy if the paper were to live another three months, the staff of the "Daily Herald" is alleged to have stated that it could do very well without literary editor and dramatic critic! Times are indeed changed since the "Daily Chronicle" was under H. W. Massingham. H. W., I should say, is a great journalist. H. J., on the other hand, is a young man who writes to the papers, and for the papers, about birds. At the time the Plumage Bill was before Parliament the newspapers were full of correspondence about the Plumage Bill, and it seemed to me that the letters were always signed "H. J. Massingham". He has written some volumes about birds and other natural objects, several of them containing reprinted papers, and was for a time a critic of books upon "The Nation". I should not call him a genial writer, but he is a journalist of considerable ability in his own field.

* * * *

Compton Mackenzie is in London as I write, and has had a busy year in the Channel Islands. His literary activity has been prodigious. Quite apart from novels, he has been collaborating with Archibald Marshall in the writing of a book entitled "Gramophone Nights", which Heinemann is to publish, and has been running his paper, "The Gramophone", of which I have already given some account. This paper, by the way, is a steady success, and its circulation has grown to a point which is really satisfactory. It will soon be impossible to get any of the back numbers, so smartly have they been acquired, both immediately upon publication and since, by enthusiasts for the gramophone and for the works of Mackenzie. I gather that the paper has some considerable influence, moreover, upon

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the gramophone market. It will certainly do much to improve the taste of gramophone users, and it has come as a boon to many whose knowledge of music is less than their taste for it. For example, the criticisms in the paper have always been absolutely fearless, and this has given readers confidence to follow the editorial judgment in the matter of purchases. "Gramophone Nights" is an extension of this idea. It is to give an almost limitless collection of programs which, by contrast and by tact in juxtaposition, will fill the evenings of the year with profound pleasure, and at the same time with musical education. As Mackenzie is all on the side of the best music all this varied and enthusiastic exposition can be nothing less than a great gain. And as improvements in mechanism are produced every week I foresee a time when even the snobs will find it tolerable to themselves to listen to the music of the great composers in their own drawing rooms. One thing worse than the complacency of the ardent gramophonist is the complacency of the person who condemns the gramophone, and thus feels pride in superior taste. Mackenzie has done many spectacular things in the course of his life, but in this act he has been a leader. He has done a useful turn to the gramophone industry, and incidentally to music lovers who are content to accept the machine with recognition of its present shortcomings and with hope for the future. Hats off to Mackenzie, as the "Daily Mail" would say.

* * * *

I am now reading Stephen McKenna's novel, "Vindication", and do not propose to say anything here about its literary qualities. But this is the book which has just given rise to an action in the English law courts, and as the case is of general interest I shall outline what I understand to be the facts. Robert Donald, when he relinquished the editorship of the "Daily Chronicle", bought several papers, which he proceeded to run. Among these was "The Referee", which calls itself "the unique Sunday journal", and is read very largely by members of the theatrical profession. It is a paper which is unlike any other, and among its features has always included upon its front page a True-Blue-English article about politics, in a strain to be best admired by those who are vehemently patriotic without being very learned in the affairs of the nation. This article has at different times been written by David Christie Murray and Arnold White. There follow, as a rule, a couple of closely printed pages about the theatre, in which the name of George Bernard Shaw (unless I remember wrongly) is consistently execrated, and the name of Sir Arthur Pinero is always accompanied by the loyally championing legend, "England's Greatest Dramatist". I have always thought that Bernard Shaw intended the character of Flawner Bannel in "Fanny's First Play" to stand for the critic (or critics) of "The Referee". Well, Robert Donald bought "The Referee", and one of his innovations, I think, was the insertion of weekly instalments of a serial story. Donald apparently bought the serial rights of a novel by Stephen McKenna. Shortly afterward he sold "The Referee". Thereafter, the new director of "The Referee" found himself in possession of a novel by McKenna, called for serial purposes "Gloria". It contained, he found, descriptions of matters which the theatrical world is in the habit only of discussing, and not of representing — seductions and the like. Contrary to general assumption, there is no

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

more narrowly moral section of the community than that which represents human nature upon the stage. Consequently the new director of "The Referee" found it expedient to cut certain portions of the tale out of its serial publication in his pages. To this, as there was no note accompanying the mutilated version, Stephen McKenna objected. The story, he thought, should be published as it was written, more especially as his name was attached to it as that of the author. So he took action to restrain the cuts or to force the director of "The Referee" to acknowledge that he was bowdlerizing the story. And he won his case, Mr. Justice McCardie telling him in effect that he left the court without a stain upon his character. Mr. Justice McCardie is an intelligent judge, and he did well to establish the author's right to be regarded as a responsible person. I think most of us were pleased at the decision. It was necessary.

* * * *

Nevertheless, the point goes further than this case, for the editor of any paper is in a difficult position with regard to matter of which he does not approve. I have always understood that when an article was signed, or a story, the author took full responsibility. After all, if it is thought worth while to publish signed work of his in any paper, the author is sought as a contributor by the editor. He cannot *insist* upon contributing to a paper, but if he is invited to contribute it is because the editor hopes to derive profit from the power to use and to advertise the author's name as that of a contributor. Moreover, a commission is a commission. An author is requested to write something. He writes it. If the editor does not like what the author has written it shows that he has been unacquainted with the author's real potentialities. In that case, he ought to have made some clear stipulation beforehand as to what he will accept, and what he cannot publish. Otherwise, in commissioning work, he is saying to the author — "You have a free hand. I back my confidence in you by taking every risk. What you think good enough to sign, I shall think good enough to print." In the present case, no doubt, what had been written seemed quite good enough to print. But it was found unsuitable. What a dilemma! Is not the remedy to make no contracts in advance? I have myself once had an article (a signed article) cut. I still think the editorial prerogative was in that case abused. The cut was a sentence only — or a couple of sentences — but it threw the whole of the article out of gear. In that case the question was one of fact, and it became one of opinion. The entire staff of the paper was called twice into secret committee, and the offending words were removed. I did not resign my position on the paper, nor go to law. I am glad I did not, because I should most likely have had a formidable array of witnesses to prove that I had been protected from myself. No such justification was urged in Stephen McKenna's case. The plea there was simply that certain passages were unsuited to the character of the paper for which the story had been written. There was no suggestion of bad faith on the author's side. Having read the book, I feel that the objection to these passages upon moral grounds was indefensible. They may not be edifying to puritans, but they are in no sense pornographic. We therefore come back to the question whether any editor is entitled to refuse to publish something which he has definitely commissioned, on the ground that it is not what he wants. I think

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he is not. I think he should insist upon seeing what he is buying, if he is squeamish; or, if he has not insisted, that he ought to take the consequences of a step in the dark. On the other hand, I wonder what would happen if all authors who had their work cut in serial publication (not upon moral grounds, but for reasons of space or editorial distaste) were to bring actions at law. Surely that would quickly bring to an end the pernicious system of buying pigs in pokes, which is at the present time so marked a feature of the journalistic and publishing worlds. Such a conclusion might lower the literary agent's income; but it could not in the end affect the honest author otherwise than favorably.

SIMON PURE

CONFESSION

By Carolyn Wells

REGRET! Remorse! dire words are they:
And always set my nerves to shivering;
Yet every week my soul they flay
And 'neath their stinging lash I'm quivering.

I read each Sunday in the "Times"
Letters from people wildly querying
"Where's this verse from?" "Who wrote these rhymes?"
Until my very soul is wearying.

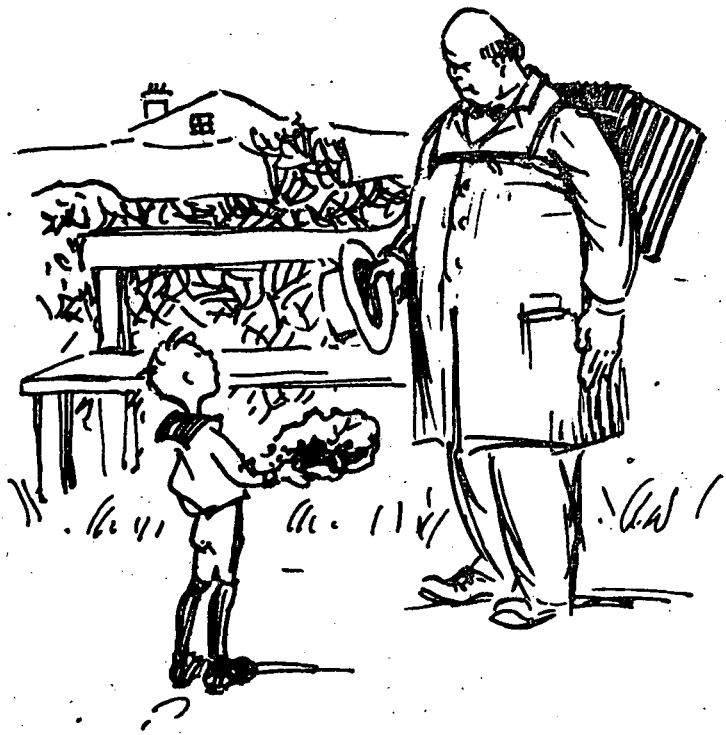
Full oft the answers I do know
Nor need to look in books of reference:
But do I tell the askers so
In words of courtesy and deference?

No, I confess I am not fain
To satisfy their curiosity:
Of erudition I'm not vain,
And I've small share of generosity.

I may as well admit it flat,
I am too selfish to be bothering
With who wrote this? and who wrote that?
And all that sort of futile pothering.

So I ignore their pleas. And yet
To my grave fault I am not blinded:
I've deep remorse and wild regret
That I am not more helpful minded.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



PRINCESS SWALLOW-HEART

By Padraic Colum

With Sketches by Mary M. Ludlum

I THINK I can describe my Peepshow Man best by saying that he was a ponderous man. But I am not sure that I remember the way in which his ponderousness was most palpably shown. He walked ponderously, with his head down; that was because he carried on his back the black box that was his peepshow. I know that his head was very large and bald. Still, I think it was his speech that, more than anything else, left the effect of ponderousness upon the very young youngster who remembers him now — his slow and deliberate speech that had in it words and phrases that he repeated and dwelt on with great satisfaction. Yes, it was undoubtedly his speech that made him seem such a ponderous person. And that very word *undoubtedly* is owing to him; it was dropped by him into the youngster's vocabulary as one drops a heavy stone into a well.

He used to appear coming along a very dusty road that went by a great gate outside of which that youngster often stood. Opposite that gate there was a wayside bench, and the Peep-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

show Man, unstrapping his black box and taking it off his shoulders, would often sit there. Behind the bench there was a white thorn hedge that used to have sheets on it drying. And the youngster before spoken of would gain many memorable effects in language and many unforgetable readings of life by presenting himself at that bench and making himself a respectful and attentive audience.

One day, after he had eaten out of a cabbage leaf the red and black currants that had been brought to him out of the garden, the Peepshow Man permitted the youngster to hear this convincing history:

"The swallows fly hither and thither and yon, and if they light upon a wall, it is undoubtedly because they are gathering to fly farther away — into a more distant region, as I might say. And when they get into that region they are not at rest, for the swallows, as I have heard, must look at themselves flying across the Red Sea.

"It is kind-father to her, as you might say, for the swallow to fly here and there and not to be contented in any place. And there are people in the world like the swallow, my young man. My own sweetheart was like that. And for that reason she was called the Princess Swallow-heart.

"Of course, being a Princess, she lived in a white fronted castle. Upstairs and downstairs she had gold and silver to look on. I was the especial favorite of her father, and by that I mean that I was the fair haired boy with him. One day he asked me to come into his parlor, and when I came in he said to me that I should marry his daughter.

" 'I will', said I, 'if my fair lady will have me.'

" 'I will', said she, 'if you bring to me the tallow of the Red Ox of the High Hill to make the candles for the wedding night.'

" 'I will', said I, 'with a heart and a half.' And I bowed down to the ground when I said it to her.

"Then I took my father's sword with the silver handle to it, and I went

"The Red Ox rushed out"

off to seek the Red Ox of the High Hill. I went across the stepping stones, and at the herdsman's hut I stayed for a year and a day. All that time I was in service to him so that he would show me how to come to the Red Ox of the High Hill. 'It is a fee that is easily paid', he said to me when I mentioned it. And then and there he took me to the lair of the Red Ox.

"When the gate was opened the Red Ox rushed out, and before I could draw my father's silver hilted sword from my belt he had me across his two great horns, and away with him. There was no one to cry 'stop' until we came to the top of the High Hill.

"And when we came to the top of the High Hill he bellowed until he shook the ground, and he cast up the sods with his hoofs until he made a trench as wide as a mearing. And all that

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

time I was lying in a hole that was where an oak tree was growing until the Red Ox rooted it up with his tramplings and tossings. I drew my father's silver handled sword from my belt and I came out of the hole. I stood before the Red Ox. But I barely had time to make a pass with my sword before he flung me into the hole again, and there I lay, thinking my heart had been changed into a clot of blood.

"But then I remembered that I was away from my father and my mother, and that there would be nobody to cry over me if I drew my last breath in that place. So I scrambled out of the hole and I faced the Red Ox once more. I dazzled his eyes with the brightness of my blade, and with the edge of it I sheared off one of his great horns. But he took me on the horn that was left him, and he flung me into the hole again.

"I lay there like a buried man, and the Red Ox went ramping and raging around me. I thought that there was nothing in the world that could make me get up and stand before the Red Ox of the High Hill again. But then the thought of the Princess Swallow-heart came to me, and the way she walked and the light she had in her eyes. And I thought that if fighting the Red Ox would win her for me, fight him I would, until my sword went through him or his horn went through me.

"So I grasped my father's silver handled sword once more and I stood before the Red Ox. For seven days and seven nights I fought with him, and at last I drove my sword through his heart and I killed him. The herdsman and his seven sons were by that time coming up the High Hill, and I loaded the baskets that they had with the tallow that was in the Red Ox. We went back down the High Hill, and after that I came to the white fronted castle where my sweetheart lived.

"I will engage that, not since Mor's Sons went with the Enchanted Cat, were there such preparations for a wedding as there were in that castle after I came to it. Butchers and bakers and brewers were there. And if a man stood in the middle of the road he would be trampled by grooms that were going to the four airts to bring quality-people to the wedding. And did I see the Princess, you say? It would be hard to see her in the throngs that were there. But I saw her on the roof of the castle one day when the crows were coming home. We weren't together, you understand — she was on the roof and I was on the ground. She saw me looking up at her, and she cut off a tress of her hair and she let it fall down to me.

"Well, the tallow I brought was molded into candles, and such a weight of candles was never known before. And when they were all lighted no castle ever shone as that castle shone, for in each of the five hundred and fifty-five windows there were five candles lighted; there was a hundred lighted in the hall, there was a hundred lighted in the gallery, and there was a hundred lighted on the stairway. And where there was darkness outside the castle there were bonfires burning. If you had seen that castle when it was all lighted up it would undoubtedly give you something to think about in the darkness of the night.

"There was the best harper in the world to play for the wedding, and there were the best dancing masters in the world to teach the people how to behave at a wedding so noble. I was the fair haired boy, as you might say, and everyone wanted to be next and nigh me.

"When the clerk called for the bride

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and groom, the groom made answer, but if he did, the bride did not. She was not to be found, high up nor low down. The last that anyone had seen of her was on the roof of the castle. Well, some said one thing and some said another, but the upshot of the whole matter was that there was no wedding in the castle that was all shining with candles.

"After that I was back with my mother and father, attending to my own business of shoeing horses, and giving no heed at all to the match-makers that were coming around with the tale of the farmers' handsome daughters that were willing to take up with me. A pedler came and he stayed the night in the house. He opened his pack to show what was in it, and he took out of it a tress of hair. That tress was so bright that it made a light in the house. And it made a light in the haggard, too, for although it was dark night on the ground, men went out and threshed corn by the light it gave.

"I knew that the tress of hair came off the head of the Princess Swallow-heart. When I asked the pedler he had to tell me about a girl that was at the miller's, and that gave him a tress of hair for a comb out of his pack. Well, to the miller's I went, with a strong horse under me, with silver in my pocket, and with whatever else might be asked of me. And there, washing her clothes by the willows, I saw my sweetheart.

" 'Put a pillion on your horse', said she, 'and I'll ride behind you until we come to wherever you'd take me. And we'll go out of this before night falls, for the Duke is coming with his coach and six to take me to his domains. Bring me to your mother's house and there I will wed you.'

"I got a pillion for my horse, and she mounted behind me, and we rode off with her arms around me, and with silver bells ringing before us. On we rode, and we met the Duke's coach coming along the road with footmen standing behind it, and horsemen riding before it, and players and jugglers upon jennets and asses. They went by, and I heard my sweetheart laughing and laughing behind me.

"And then I heard no more singing, and no more talking, and no laughing from her. Her arms were around me no more. When I looked behind me she wasn't there. She was gone like the dew off the blade of grass, and where she had gone to only the birds of the night could tell me.

"She met with the players who were coming back from where they had followed the Duke's coach to, and away she went with them, and with them she traveled all the roads of the world. It was after that that I got my peep-show and went on the roads, meeting boys who are willing to pay a penny to look into it.

"A score of years after that I was going along this road, low in spirits

"Swallow-heart came back to me"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"We met the Duke's coach"

and very sorrowful in myself, and I looked around me and I saw that somebody was following me out of the town. I was afeard, for this was a hag, and she was pursuing me. You might say that I went hurrying on. Oh, indeed, I could see that the person behind me was tracking me, or, as I might say, following vigilantly after me. I went through the gap in the hedge above this place — there, where the sloe bush is blossoming. I hid behind the hedge until she went past. Then I went to the pool that is below, and I sat above it, for a wise man told me that beside still water is where a man thinks best.

"And I did not know that anyone came next or near me until I saw a face looking up at me out of the water. It was the loveliest face man ever saw, and it had all around it the brightest hair that ever was. I knew that it was the face of Swallow-heart that I saw in the water. I looked beside me then, and I saw herself, and she was bending down to the water. An old, ragged shawl was lying on the ground; this was the shawl she covered herself with when she followed me down the road.

"That was the way Swallow-heart came back to me. I won't say that she stayed with me, for she would go off and off again, like the swallows that have to see themselves in the water of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Red Sea. But if she'd go away one season she'd come back another. And maybe the next time you see me coming along this road you'll see with me the beauty of the world, Swallow-heart, my sweetheart."

The youngster to whom he related this history saw him many times after that, but he never saw the beauty of the world with him. Perhaps she had gone so far away before I saw him that it took her many seasons to get back to him. Having eaten the currants and having very courteously restored the cabbage leaf the Peepshow Man put the black box upon his shoulders and went heavily upon his way.

SONNETS ON THE SEA'S VOICE

By George Sterling

SINCE ocean rolled and ocean winds were strong,
That voice on all the narrow shores is found,
Unchanging, immemorial, profound,
A sorrowing the caverned cliffs prolong,
Where foam is choral and where thunders throng,
Or where the sands, uncharted or renowned,
Tremble forever to its elder sound,
The ground note of the planet's undersong.

What man shall hear that utterance, alone,
That dirge of life, that music not of man,
Nor know how brief a term our seasons span
And what a mystery our hearts denote,
That hear from strands eternally unknown
The pulse of chords tremendous and remote?

II

THE wind has loosed its armies on the west,
And ocean joined that huge hostility;
Armored in jade, the legions, swinging free,
Hurl rank on rank against the headland's breast.
Within the thunders of that old unrest,
The doom of gods that were and gods to be
Seems sounded by the trumpets of the sea —
The music of an everlasting quest.

That cry was, when the sapphire deeps began,
And still the hosts of wind and sea renew
Their ancient menace in the heart of man,
As, consonant, the voices of that war
Meet in one Voice on the eternal blue:
"Time was, Time is, and Time shall be no more!"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TO SEE OR NOT TO SEE

Plays and Motion Pictures of the Month

By John Farrar

1. THE SWAN: *Molnar's romantic and satirical drama played with dash and perfection. Eva Le Gallienne, beautiful and subtle. (To be reviewed next month.)*

2. TARNISH: *Modern sex drama concerning the weaknesses of mankind. Well written, staged, and acted. (Reviewed below.)*

3. THE NERVOUS WRECK: *The funniest evening that can be provided this season, with a pill taking hero and a resourceful heroine. (Reviewed below.)*

4. A LESSON IN LOVE: *A reasonably good play by the authors of "Secrets" with really fine performances by Emily Stevens and William Faversham.*

5. CHAINS: *A study of contrasted social standards and moralities.*

6. CHILDREN OF THE MOON: *The mother complex presented symbolically. Second act excellent drama.*

7. RAIN: *This South Sea sex play has unfailing vitality and still attracts packed houses.*

8. IN LOVE WITH LOVE: *Three fellows and a girl perform a series of believable and not very tragic events culminating in one marriage.*

9. AREN'T WE ALL?: *Cyril Maude proves to be quite as susceptible as his son in a somewhat sparkling comedy.*

10. POPPY, BATTLING BUTLER *(reviewed below), and* THE MAGIC RING *(reviewed below) are the best musical comedies at the moment. Of the revues Earl Carroll's* VANITIES *and* THE MUSIC BOX REVUE *are colorful, entertaining, and tuneful.*

AFTER all, whatever a play may be about, wherever it may rank in the artistic or technical scale, the one thing we demand of it really is that it be theatrically effective. Two plays this month, for me, at least, answer this demand completely. To any person who is not the type that belittles Charlie Chaplin, I recommend Owen Davis's farce, "The Nervous Wreck". It is shrewd, rollicking, and finished. To those who like "strong drama" well played, with a tone of reality, "Tarnish" is the best play of the new season.

I am more convinced than ever that Owen Davis is one of the finest craftsmen of our theatre. It is not so much the actual lines of "The Nervous Wreck" that convince one of this—they, many of them, are old timber,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

given a new tint by excellent playing; but Mr. Davis has a sense of public psychology, an ability to write a scene that clicks, which is the summum bonum of the playwright. "The Nervous Wreck" is all about a young man who thinks he is sick and isn't, and in the course of his recovery becomes bandit, waiter, and lover. The incidents which attend his progress through the western country are not important; but they are exceedingly funny. A brilliant piece of satirical writing jumps out in the last act, where Davis burlesques the psychological detective and his word-association tests. Although its tone is burlesque it seems to me penetrating enough to be called satire. Otto Kruger, having weathered a rather heavy season last year, emerges as a brilliant *farceur*. He is as funny as, if not funnier than, Harold Lloyd — and June Walker is entertaining and good to look upon. Her part is by far the most difficult which Mr. Davis has created — yet with the most improbable material in a highly improbable play, she creates an illusion of reality. While the character she portrays is possibly the biggest liar to be seen on any New York stage, she manages to keep the sympathy of the audience.

Gilbert Emery is a capable actor. In "The Truth About Blayds", in "The Enchanted Cottage", now in "Chains", he has shown restraint, and an especial ability to portray characters which demand gentlemanliness, strength, and a rather subtle quality of charm. As a playwright his virtues are more rugged. He is a realist who is at times exceedingly bitter, yet who does not disdain the use of dramatically effective tricks to make his points. "The Hero" was a play which might well have won the Pulitzer Prize. It was as bitter a picture of war in its way as Thomas Boyd's "Through the Wheat", and as true. In some ways it was a better play than "Tarnish"; but it did not have the latter's qualities of success. In "Tarnish", Mr. Emery has taken the old theme of man's morality and woman's. He says, in effect, that men are a pretty bad lot; but that they mean well! They are all tarnished. But unlike Mr. Goodman and Mr. Galsworthy, who in "Chains" and "Windows" respectively use characters which seem to be mouthpieces for ideas rather than human beings, Mr. Emery chooses to show real people and to create vivid situations for them. He does not argue in his play. He lets the drama itself make his point. Emmet Carr falls in love with Letitia Tevis. Letitia is a nice girl whose family have fallen in fortunes, whose mother is a complaining snob, whose father, a useless old bird, makes a fool of himself with women. The climactic scene of the play brings Emmet's former mistress and Letitia together over a mixup with the erring father. It is psychological melodrama, and as played by Tom Powers, Ann Harding, and Fania Marinoff it has elements of fine tragedy. Emery's dialogue is true and often amusing. His characters are well founded emotionally and he develops them surely. The father, Adolph Tevis, as played by Albert Gran, has been currently criticized. I imagine that the comic relief he furnishes makes several almost unbearably painful scenes easier to bear. The production is by John Cromwell, for many years of the Brady forces, and he deserves all credit. For those who like serious plays with reasonably happy endings, "Tarnish" affords a fine evening in the theatre.

To the already long list of realistic sex dramas of the year, "The Independent Theatre" added Lulu Vollmer's "The Shame Woman". It is not

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

so good a play as her earlier "Sun-Up". It is annoyingly brutal in its language. It is annoyingly sentimental in its final scene. The story of the seduction of a mother and her adopted daughter by the same man is not a new one. Miss Vollmer has again taken the Kentucky mountains as the locale of her play. She writes simply and forcefully, but the play loses dramatic power by its slow movement and its length. Like "The Lullaby" it is partly a story within a story. This, to me, is always annoying on the stage. The natural progression of incident seems to me the only real movement for drama. "The Shame Woman" has a fine cast, one of the finest of the year, with three of four superb performances, especially that of Florence Rittenhouse.

The Theatre Guild chose for its first offering of the season a Galsworthy comedy, "Windows". It is a mediocre play for Galsworthy to have written; but it is amusing and certainly worth seeing. Galsworthy's habit of writing with a sort of wistful detachment is now becoming, in a sense, annoying. Here his window cleaning philosopher, and the daughter who has murdered her own baby, are contrasted with a liberal minded psychological novelist, his practical wife and two children. Like "Loyalties", "Windows" is a study of opposed viewpoints; but, unlike "Loyalties", it does not emerge as an essentially dramatic theme. The novelist's son, a poet who has fought in the war, becomes interested in the window cleaner's daughter, who has been taken as serving maid by the novelist's wife to give the girl a chance after her prison term. The window cleaner realizes that his daughter was born for the love of pleasant things. His philosophy is, "Follow your instincts." This is opposed to the realization of what happens when you do follow your instincts, the absolute necessity for conservatism. In the end, Mr. Galsworthy gives us his solution; but it is not a palpable one. "Windows" is a genial, mellow, wise little comedy; but strangely inconclusive. The Theatre Guild has given it a smooth and capable production.

Molnar's drama of insanity, "Launzi", as adapted by Edna St. Vincent Millay, proved hazy, dull, unpleasant, but — if you could sit through such a muddy evening — interesting. It is the tale of how a young girl, because of rejected love and a couple of Freudian complexes (not especially clear ones either), believes herself to be an angel. All this is very hard on her poor old father, especially when she refuses to drink her milk. Miss Millay, of course, could not write an entire play of undistinguished prose, so that there are passages of beauty and power; but many of the scenes are lifeless and unconvincing and, except for lovely sets by Robert Edmond Jones, the production seemed to me inept. Pauline Lord, a fine actress at best, did remarkably with a rôle to which she was obviously unsuited.

"The Dancers", Gerald Du Maurier's great success, still running in London, is good entertainment. It is highly artificial in spots, sentimental in others, tawdry in others, and dull in somewhat fewer others; but in spite of that Du Maurier, who plays the part in London himself, knows his theatre, and succeeds in holding the interest. The rather flabby story concerns the destruction of a man's ideal of women and his finding of real love at the last. Richard Bennett is effective in Du Maurier's rôle. The second scene, a barroom cabaret somewhere in the Canadian northwest, is supervaudeville and somewhat novel. The

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

play is at its worst when it attempts to be light. The dialogue is too clumsy to carry an actionless scene and even good acting does not help greatly.

Sothern and Marlowe in their Shakespeare festival bring the best traditions of American acting to the fore. Their choice of "Cymbeline" as a first production was, perhaps, unfortunate; but in "The Taming of the Shrew" Julia Marlowe is as gay as life itself and as subtle as death. She is woman incarnate — somewhat terrifying, therefore. Her Katharina, and Sothern's gusty Petruchio, made their otherwise capable production a most vivid affair.

The Selwyns have imported from Montmartre the famous Grand Guignol players. They have brought the celebrated theatre of horrors, curiously enough, to the Frolic Theatre where Mr. Ziegfeld's midnight revue once held forth. The first bill of plays was ill chosen. If one wishes to be horrified one wishes to be horrified, and the particular varieties of death and degeneracy displayed on the New Amsterdam roof were not of sufficient vigor greatly to shock a New York audience which roars at the obscenities of "Artists and Models". If we accept the gay amateurishness of much of the French theatre, the company is admirable. There are one or two fine character actors in it. Coming, though, to the country of Poe, these talented Frenchmen who are said to aim to shock audiences to the fainting point and carry consequently an attendant doctor and nurse, must employ better weapons than the somewhat usual and far from subtle plays of their first program.

In "For All of Us" William Hodge again proves himself a character actor of high attainments. This talky, preachy play which he has written and which is often a mere monologue for himself, he makes curiously alive. It is the story of a reformed jailbird who comes into a banker's house from a street gang outside, cures the banker of disease, and generally makes the world a better place in which to live. As usual and as banal as the play is, it has a sound psychological basis, and seemed not only to hold the audience in which I sat but occasionally to thrill it; oftener, it amused. This performance might be called an animated sermon.

"Battling Butler" is a good farce as well as a good musical comedy. It has especially fine dancing and is downright funny to boot. Charles Ruggles as a nervous husband who has pretended to be a prizefighter for especial reasons — and isn't — is good. William Kent, as his constantly disturbed friend, is still better. Even in these days of fervid male choristers, this especial collection came as something of a shock. With usual mate-

THE DRAMA SHELF

"2×2=5" by Gustav Wied (Nicholas L. Brown). A fantastic and talky comedy concerning marriage, immorality, and censorship.

"Playwrights on Playmaking" by Brander Matthews (Scribner). A wise and tolerant series of essays with much information and flashes of genuine humor.

"Cain" by Lord Byron (Putnam). A translation of French material and Byronic data concerning this mystical drama.

"Scene" by E. Gordon Craig (Oxford University Press). A beautifully written, sumptuously published history of scenics with a group of Craig's etchings which are exquisite.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rial, a story which combines Aladdin's lamp with Cinderella, dainty Mitzi in "The Magic Ring" proved herself a real actress and brought charm and vitality to what is the best musical comedy of the older type in town.

OUTSTANDING MOTION PICTURES

1. THE COVERED WAGON: *American historical drama. It is moving and sincere.*

2. SCARAMOUCHE: *Spirited costume drama. Better than either "The Four Horsemen" or "The Prisoner of Zenda". (Reviewed below.)*

3. A WOMAN OF PARIS: *A new spirit in film direction. A simple story animated to a point of great beauty by the genius of Charles Chaplin, who wrote and directed it. (Reviewed below.)*

4. IF WINTER COMES: *Hutchinson's novel almost perfectly presented. Character acting of the highest type.*

5. THE WHITE SISTER: *A moving story with beautiful Italian settings and fine acting by Lillian Gish. (Reviewed below.)*

6. PURITAN PASSIONS: *Glenn Hunter in the film version of Percy MacKaye's "The Scarecrow". A thoroughly artistic production. (Reviewed below.)*

OF all our native directors Rex Ingram is perhaps the best in his handling of crowds and in his choosing of character types. "Scaramouche" was a gay but robust romantic novel as Rafael Sabatini wrote it. As played by Ramon Navarro it is a thoroughly enjoyable motion picture. Ingram understands lighting, too. His shaft of sunlight through the window of a peasant's cottage in the early part of "Scaramouche" has a beauty which is simple and which, somehow, creates a setting for what might otherwise have been a mawkish scene. Navarro as Scaramouche is handsome, vital, impudent, graceful. If you are not weary of French Revolutionary drama, here is a picture which you will like mightily.

"A Woman of Paris" is a simple story of a country girl who becomes the mistress of a rich Parisian man of the world, only to find that she is bound to the ideal of youth and an early love. Chaplin has directed this story with power and vision, so much so that it stands out as one of the few motion pictures which contain moments of real genius in direction. There is scarcely any explanatory material, there are few characters; the settings and lighting effects are simple. Chaplin lets his actors occupy the screen. He is courageously cynical. He shows here again that he is a master not only of pantomime, but of how to impart the art of pantomime to others. If you are interested in the future of the motion picture as a real art, here is the most promising signpost we have ever had, with one possible exception — a short, atmospheric piece called "Old Bill" from Anatole France's "Crainquebille". This was produced in France. It is the story of an old peasant who doesn't think very much, who takes life as it comes

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and who meets tragedy. The audience in which I sat applauded this picture as I have heard few motion pictures applauded. It was adapted by Hugo Riesenfeld for America and was shown as a program picture by him. Such a picture could be made from Fannie Hurst's "Lummox"; but it would have to be directed by Harry Millarde or Charles Chaplin to be simple and beautiful as life itself—and as starkly tragic.

Lillian Gish in "The White Sister" and Glenn Hunter in "Puritan Passions" give superb performances. Miss Gish is one of the finest emotional actresses of the screen. "The White Sister" is a reverent and attractive picture. It would gain by the introduction of some humor. It is pretty solemn. Hunter in "Puritan Passions" displays a sensitiveness and a poise that lift him from the ranks of the juveniles. The story is not strikingly dramatic; but it has moments of great atmospheric loveliness.

CHANGE

By F. R. McCreary

I GREW from a soil made rich by a wide grey river,
A river that born of the harshness of boulders
And the toughness of pine roots,
Came by a long push through granite and the clutching of forests,
To spread out by the grass of my father's dooryard,
To give itself freely in a long embrace.
From rock-roots I had the soft hands of meadows,
From dark-rigid forests
Muscled with the long winds of the winter,
I had the ease of wide fields blowing with broad-leaf tobacco,
From the cries and the protests of growing
I had the satisfied speech of achievement.
There was too much slumbering on that dark soil,
There were too many doorways overgrown with honeysuckle,
And the grey old hill women who watch the valleys forever
Looked down with reproach.
Now I'm off to pay tribute to their unyielding eyes,
I am following the river back to the pine roots;
And the grey water turns to white water,
The still water to dancing,
The dignified, monotonous, wise water
Turns to laughter and singing.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CHRISTMAS PACKAGES

A Holiday Review of Children's Books

By Anne Carroll Moore

HALF a century has gone by since the first number of "St. Nicholas" sped merrily on its way from Manhattan Island. East, west, north, south—and across the sea—it traveled, bearing a reminder of the relationship of the good St. Nicholas to the port of New York in a merry challenging greeting from Mary Mapes Dodge to the boys and girls of 1873. Fortunate is the public library or the household which possesses the first volume of "St. Nicholas", for it is rapidly becoming worth its weight in gold.

Never a Christmas draws near that I do not turn back to it and to other early volumes of "St. Nicholas" to recapture their holiday spirit, to refresh my recollection concerning those qualities in story or picture which stay alive longest, to reaffirm that spiritual kinship with Mrs. Dodge which I first felt on reading the St. Nicholas Eve chapter of "Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates".

I was about ten years old when I read it for the first time. Long before that I had a sense of Christmas in the north made vivid by personal experience of the Swedish maids who were the familiar spirits of my childhood. But it was the St. Nicholas Eve chapter of "Hans Brinker" which gave me a new date from which to reckon the beginning of Christmas — a date which for many years I kept secretly, since it was not a New England custom to observe St. Nicholas Eve.

The discovery of Twelfth Night was made about a year later when I decided to read a one volume edition of Shakespeare straight through to see if I could do it and to see what Shakespeare was really like. I may add that this feat was accomplished in secret, and it left me for several years without desire to reread any one of the plays. But it also left me with a new boundary to Christmas and a still unsatisfied passion for seeing festive plays at holiday time. Henceforth masks, mumming, and pantomime were to haunt my dreams for a solid month of Christmas holidays.

I looked for Christmas chapters in every story I read, and most of them were pathetically lacking in any dramatic pictorial interest. I hunted for Christmas carols, poems, and plays, and how few I found in the books of the time!

Above all, I read cook books old and new. Wherever I could find a cook book I read its Christmas recipes, and proceeded to try out those which interested me with an abandon and disregard of consequences not commonly associated with New England kitchens.

With Charlotte, the Swedish maid I remember best, in the offing to keep up the wood fire in the cook stove and lend a hand with the egg beater when my small arms grew tired, no genuine Christmas cake beckoned in vain from a printed page from the time I was seven years old.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Cooking had attracted me long before that — the family tradition is that no one can remember when I first began to cook — but cooking as a dramatic experience and a kind of mystic bond with other lands and other peoples came to me quite unconsciously when I saw the joy with which Charlotte and Matilda and their successors received my special Christmas cakes and candy. I had found a natural way of beginning Christmas with them long beforehand, at the very time it was beginning over in their own country.

Natural ways of extending Christmas beyond New Year's Day to Twelfth Night took longer to find. For years I suffered incommunicable depression after the presents had all been given and received. It wasn't that I wanted more presents. I wanted Christmas itself to last longer than it lasted in New England.

Then, one day, a wonderful thing happened. Mary Mapes Dodge stepped out of an old "St. Nicholas" as a personality, radiating the very spirit and essence of Christmas and giving positive assurance that it lasted on and on in New York and London as well as in the Holland of Hans Brinker.

I never knew Mrs. Dodge in the flesh. It never occurred to me as a child to write a letter to her. She had passed from active life long before I ever saw New York, and yet — she has exerted a potent influence over every Christmas since she came alive to me as a child in a Maine village.

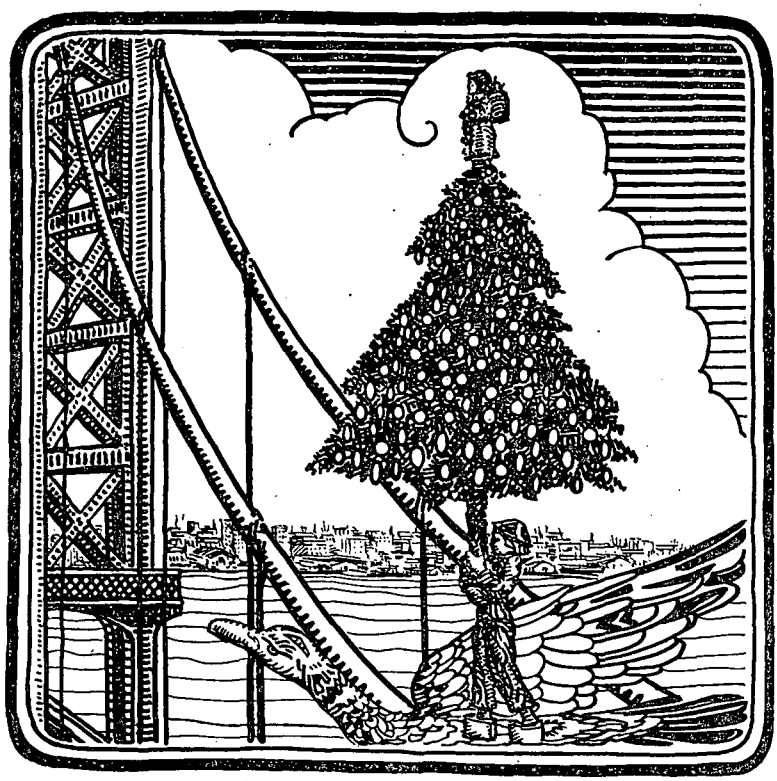
It was as inevitable that she should at last step out of the first volume of "St. Nicholas" dragging Frank Stockton and his "Queen's Museum" after her and become a living character in "Brownie's Big Party for Nicholas", as that the Knickerbockers should call out Washington Irving.

Irving lives for me in "Nicholas" for the first time in intimate association with children. I've had untold delight in "Knickerbocker" and "Old Christmas", in "The Sketch Book" and "Tales of a Traveller", but never until I heard John Moon say to Nicholas on Christmas Eve: "Let's keep on down to Bowling Green and look for St. Nicholas where Oloffe the Dreamer saw him!" have I felt the full beauty and power of his story of the coming of St. Nicholas as a story for children. The fifth chapter of "Nicholas" is by honest confession "fished out of 'Knickerbocker'" by John Moon and retold in Irving's own memorable words to the strange little Dutch boy who came to New York looking for Christmas.

John Moon is no elderly uncle, he is a young newspaper man about the age Washington Irving was when he began to write "Knickerbocker" (he was twenty-six when it was published), about the age of that "Young Gentleman of Yale" to whom William McFee addressed a remarkable letter in THE BOOKMAN for October, the letter in which he shares the riches of his own "acquired memories".

How daring a thing it was to set Nicholas marching down Fifth Avenue to the flashing orange lights of the new traffic towers in one chapter and transport him to a Chelsea fireside to listen "without tears" to "'Twas the Night before Christmas" in its native environment in another, I realized only after the story had gone beyond recall. Would Nicholas be submerged by the wealth and timeliness of Manhattan Christmas tradition? One may well ask the question, for it chances to be the century year of the publication of Clement C. Moore's "Visit from St. Nicholas" as well as the half century birthday of St. Nicholas, and nearly the three hundredth of New York it-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



From "Nicholas"

self — a staggering succession of anniversaries.

Fortunately Nicholas had the support from the beginning of a Norwegian Troll, who could and did turn into a bear whenever he felt like it, and casting off all tradition he has finally mounted a Golden Goose with his Treasure Tree just in time to allow me to open a few Christmas Packages with new light and understanding.

Every critic should try to create something once in a lifetime, regardless of consequences. It's more difficult than praising or finding fault with the work of other people; it's more fun; it heightens appreciation of all that is admirable in any sincere attempt to tell something new and different in story or pictures; and it enlarges one's sympathies for things which do not "come off".

Kate Greenaway's "A Apple Pie" is in print once more in delightful contrast to C. B. Fall's "A B C Book" which contains no deep dish, delectable, apple pie, but from Antelope to Zebra lives up to its promise. Nancy Barnhart's pictures in color and black and white for the new edition of Kenneth Grahame's "The Wind in the Willows" place this book in the hands of children for the first time with a full sense of the intimacy, the domesticity of the story. Paul Bransom drew excellent pictures of the animals but animals they remained, always remote and distinct from the story.

Nancy Barnhart seems to have taken her pictures out of Kenneth Grahame's

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mind — all except the barge woman — she surely grew on the Mississippi or the Missouri River. I am not surprised therefore to learn that the artist lives in St. Louis and that she made the drawings for her own pleasure. They were first published in England. The caroling Field Mice, Rat scribbling poetry from an easy chair, his red slippered feet on top of the desk, Toad "unhappy and forsaken" in checked suit and red vest, with a little bird singing at the window of his dungeon, are inimitable and unforgetable and give pleasure akin to that given by some of A. B. Frost's pictures for "Uncle Remus".

The quality of tenderness without sentimentality, of humor without vulgarity, appeals alike to child or grown up. While we have had notable examples of it in this country, we have had far too little of it in American books for children. A recent example of the union of these two qualities in text and pictures is to be found in Maynard Dixon's "Injun Babies" with its charming end papers of an Indian village full of life and motion.

Mr. Dixon told the stories and made the pictures for his own little girl out of his "acquired memories" as a painter of what he has seen and felt, and with the desire to illumine and interpret for her the human life of our western plains. Because they have the quality and charm of the folk tales of older countries these stories are bound to have a universal and direct appeal to children to read for themselves. Parents, teachers, and story tellers will appreciate their truth to the life depicted and will find in the book a unique contribution to American Indian lore for young children. The color reproductions would possibly gain by some elimination of process, but the make up of the book in general is so attractive and so adapted to its content as to forestall any other point of criticism. The story about "Medicine Rock" should be read by every parent who seeks in unnatural ways to eliminate fear as an element in the life of his child. It is a story that will delight boys of any age.

From the western plains of North America to the coast of Cornwall, to the land where Jack-the-Giant-Killer was born, where men are pisky-led and mermaids guard the harbors, may seem a very long leap to take to those who have not yet read the enchanting fairy romance called "Billy Barnicoat". Of all the Christmas Packages I've opened it is the most significant and the most compelling in interest as a story for young or old — as genuine *boy psychology*. Billy's mother was drowned in that "splendid Spanish ship the Maria Santissima, wrecked on the Trannion Rocks more than a hundred years ago". Billy was found, we are told, wrapped up in seaweed with a little gold ring on his left thumb, by Mistress Rachel Hornisyde, the childless wife of a fisherman and master of the lugger "The Heavenly Home", who took him to Primrose Cottage to live and taught him to say Aunt and Uncle after the Cornish custom. "They all loved the black haired little thing with his brown wide-set almond eyes, his little pointed chin and ears and his smile 'so sweet as mischief could make it' . . . Billy was taught everything children learned about the Bible a hundred years ago as well as about piskies, spriggans, merrymaids and giants." He learned above all not to be "down-daunted", which is Cornish for sad, in any circumstances; and when at last he came into full possession of the Treasure Chest which held his "Rights" he made his own terms with life.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

From "Haroun Er Raschid"

Francis Bedford's pictures not only light up the story of Billy's romantic adventures, they assist in preserving the pictorial authenticity of the Cornish background. When I had finished reading the book I looked up Greville MacDonald in "Who's Who" and I am not surprised to find that he is the son of George MacDonald, a physician with both feet planted firmly in a world he's lived in for many years. Humor, philosophy of everyday life, beauty, and genuine Cornish folk talk set the book apart and give it a place of its own, independent of any talent for story telling which may have been handed on from a gifted father. "Billy Barnicoat" bears all the marks of a genuine classic for children in its own right. It should be remembered, however, that like many another classic it must make its way slowly and according to its own nature.

With a listening ear to many Christmas Packages I hear Eleanor Farjeon's "Tom Cobble" inviting everybody to explore "Number One Joy Street" with Walter de la Mare, Rose Fyleman, the Nightingales, and the others who have contributed to the "Medley of Verse and Prose" which makes up this attractive new Holiday Annual; and I hear Henry Beston's irresistible "Enchanted Baby" crying from one of the jolliest of all holiday stories in "The Starlight Wonder Book". I listen for the "Clop-Clop Shoes" of William Bowen's "Merrimeg", the little girl who helps her mother about the house, and for that jolly original boy "Snythergen" who grows fat on round foods — oranges, pumpkins, tomatoes, and thin on long ones—asparagus, celery, macaroni. Hal Garrott and Dugald Walker have made him the fascinating character that he is.

And then from far out on the prairie comes a noisy reminder from the twins Googler and Gaggler growing up in Carl Sandburg's "Rootabaga Pigeons", that while all big boys are little inside at Christmas time, they will love such

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a fine true story as "The Dark Frigate", whose young author has now gone forth on his final quest. Charles Boardman Hawes will be long remembered for "The Mutineers" and "The Great Quest", and his last book carries the reader to a point beyond either of the earlier ones.

John Kenlon's "Fourteen Years a Sailor" tells a thrilling true story of the sea by the Chief of the Fire Department of New York City, and William Heyliger's "The Spirit of the Leader" calls out a vivid everyday reminder of the claims of American citizenship.

If it's hard to stop listening to Christmas Packages, it's still harder to stop looking inside, for the artists

From "The Wind in the Willows"

have done themselves proud this year. "The Velveteen Rabbit" has come back in time for Christmas and all who've forgotten how to fill a Christmas stocking should look at William Nicholson's.

Willy Pogany's spirited line drawings and colored frontispiece for Haroun Er Raschid stories from the "Arabian Nights", edited by Frances Jenkins Olcott, rank with his best work. Da Loria Norman, who is well known as a mural painter and illuminator, has done some highly imaginative and original illustrations in color and black and white for "Fairy Tales from Far Away". Frederick H. Martens's rendering of these stories, as of others, is lacking in color and dramatic form. Jay Van Everen's drawings for "The Wizard of the North", drawn from the "Kalevala" by Parker Fillmore with the sure touch of the story teller, take one straight into a pictorial north. But the power to make us live there continuously rests alone with the artists of the northern countries.

It is significant that the last Christmas Package opened reveals five Russian picture books, printed in Moscow in 1923, and sent as a gift to the Children's Room of the New York Public Library by a Russian visitor of the summer of 1914. The books are all charming. One of them would delight Oliver Herford, another is a Christmas picture book with a lovely cover on which these words appear:

Moposko
Ckaska

My own free rendering of these strange words is Merry Christmas to Everybody from the Children of Moscow. Never have I been more deeply touched than I was when I took this Christmas greeting from a torn yellow paper wrapper, covered back and front with strange postage stamps. This Christmas Package comes to the children of New York not to keep, but to share,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

when Christmas breaks over the world again on St. Nicholas Eve.

Hans Brinker. By Mary Mapes Dodge. Illustrated by George Wharton Edwards. Charles Scribner's Sons.

The Queen's Museum. By Frank Stockton. Illustrated by Frederic Richardson. Charles Scribner's Sons.

Knickerbocker's History of New York. By Washington Irving. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Nicholas, a Manhattan Christmas Story. By Anne Carroll Moore. With drawings by Jay Van Everen. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

A Visit from St. Nicholas. By Clement C. Moore. Illustrated by Florence Wyman Ivins. The Atlantic Monthly Press. Illustrated by Jessie Willcox Smith. Houghton Mifflin Co.

The Golden Goose Book. Illustrated by L. Leslie Brooke. Frederick Warne and Co.

A Apple Pie. By Kate Greenaway. Frederick Warne and Co.

A B C Book. By C. B. Falls. Doubleday, Page and Co.

The Wind in the Willows. By Kenneth Grahame. Illustrated by Nancy Barnhart. Charles Scribner's Sons.

Injun Babies. By Maynard Dixon. Illustrated by the author. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Billy Barnicoat. By Greville MacDonald. Illustrated by Francis Bedford. E. P. Dutton and Co. London: Allen and Unwin.

Number One Joy Street, a Medley of Verse and Prose. D. Appleton and Co. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

The Starlight Wonder Book. By Henry B. Beston. Illustrated by Maurice Day. The Atlantic Monthly Press.

Merrimeg. By William Bowen. Illustrated by Emma Brock. The Macmillan Co.

Snythergen. By Hal Garrott. Illustrated by Dugald Walker. Robert M. McBride and Co.

Rootabaga Pigeons. By Carl Sandburg. Harcourt, Brace and Co.

The Dark Frigate. By Charles Boardman Hawes. The Atlantic Monthly Press.

Fourteen Years a Sailor. By John Kenyon. George H. Doran Company.

The Spirit of the Leader. By William Heyliger. D. Appleton and Co.

The Velveteen Rabbit. By Margery Williams. With drawings in color by William Nicholson. George H. Doran Company.

Haroun Er Raschid. Edited from the Lane translation by Frances Jenkins Olcott. Illustrated by Willy Pogany. Henry Holt and Co.

Fairy Tales from Far Away. Retold by Frederick H. Martens. Illustrated in full color and in black and white by da Loria Norman. Robert M. McBride and Co.

The Wizard of the North. By Parker Fillmore. With drawings by Jay Van Everen. Harcourt, Brace and Co.

From "Injun Babies"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE BOOKMAN'S GUIDE TO FICTION

THE BOOKMAN will present each month tabloid reviews of a selected list of recent fiction. This section will include also the books most in demand according to the current reports in "Books of the Month", compiled by the R. R. Bowker Company, The Baker and Taylor Company's "Retail Bookseller", and "THE BOOKMAN'S Monthly Score". Such books as the editor especially recommends are marked with a star.

SILVER MOON—Eleanor Hallowell Abbott—*Dutton.* A talky romance, with six inane young people, a house party, and a mysterious hostess for ingredients.

FENCELESS MEADOWS—Bill Adams—*Stokes.* If the author were able to write of the sea as well as he apparently knows it, this book would be superb.

WITH THE GILT OFF—A. St. John Adcock—*Putnam.* Tales of dreary London, or to be more accurate, dreary tales of London.

GOHA THE FOOL—Albert Adès and Albert Josipovici—*Lieber, Lewis.* A tragedy of Cairo. The weeds of lasciviousness and obscenity choke its telling, but the flower of beauty raises its head for those who can forgive the lesser growth.

IN GREENBROOK—Merritt P. Allen—*Page.* "'You cast me off like a worn out glove', he muttered." Now don't get upset, for—"Their shining eyes and joined hands made the great announcement" on page 309.

BLACK'ERCHIEF DICK—Margery Allingham—*Doubleday, Page.* A romantic novel with an introduction by William McFee, said to have been written from psychic sources by a young lady of eighteen.

*BLACK OXEN—Gertrude Atherton—*Boni, Liveright.* A book of high society and rejuvenation—gossipy, journalistic, readable, if annoying.

THAT WHICH IS PASSED—G. Murray Atkin—*Crowell.* A charming Englishwoman confesses her past to her husband, only to discover that he knew it all the time.

MISS BRACEGIRDLE—Stacy Aumonier—*Doubleday, Page.* Nothing to write home about, though they are quite pleasing stories of a type suitable to the public taste.

THE ROMANCE OF A ROGUE—Ruby M. Ayres—*Doran.* Ayres's sex sarsaparilla.

THE DIM LANTERN—Temple Bailey—*Penn.* One of the very simplest of love stories, which the public still finds exceedingly palatable.

SPLASHING INTO SOCIETY—Iris Barry—*Dutton.* A dismal book; every sentence packed with one of the author's own guffaws! While his hilarity reaches the hiccoughing stage, we grow moroser and moroser.

TYRREL OF THE COW COUNTRY—Robert Ames Bennett—*McClurg.* A riot of a story; may there soon be a sequel!

*JO ELLEN—Alexander Black—*Harper.* An interesting, capable, and sane picture of the modern working girl.

THE WALLET OF KAI LUNG—Ernest Bramah—*Doran.* Satire from the mouth of a Chinese story teller. Mr. Bramah uses words as if they were jade ornaments.

THE SUN FIELD—Heywood Broun—*Putnam.* A better novel than "The Boy Grew Older" but it hasn't so much of the real, whimsical, sentimental Broun in it.

AIN'T ANGIE AWFUL!—Gelett Burgess—*Dorrance.* Punning may be the lowest form of wit but it creates most of the fun throughout a lot of queer rambling chapters.

JIBBY JONES—Ellis Parker Butler—*Houghton Mifflin.* Boys being boys very amusingly and a treasure hunt with highly original features.

CHANGELING—Donn Byrne—*Century.* An Irish romantic collects thirteen of his short stories for the new audience won by "Messer Marco Polo". To create a phrase, Mr. Byrne is an authentic prose-poet.

*A LOST LADY—Willa Cather—*Knopf.* An almost perfect character sketch of a weak lady as seen through the eyes and actions of her lovers.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

*ONE OF OURS—Willa Cather—*Knopf.* This story of a young Scandinavian's reactions to life and war has appealed to those who like to think the late war was romantic.

LIP MALVY'S WIFE—George Agnew Chamberlain—*Harper.* An epic of incident, emotion, and tragedy in Darkest Africa.

THE MIDDLE PASSAGE—Daniel Chase—*Macmillan.* Something different enough to make it almost a classic of the days when men who were men went down to the sea in ships.

JIM HANVEY, DETECTIVE—Octavus Roy Cohen—*Dodd, Mead.* These episodes in the life of a detective of beefy frame and chain lightning brain are replete with humor and human interest.

THE GASPARDS OF PINE CROFT—Ralph Connor—*Doran.* Story of the northwest written with the inimitable transparent sincerity which is the stamp of truly popular fiction.

WEST OF THE WATER TOWER—Homer Croy —*Harper.* Another realistic study of young love and passion in the middle west.

THE ALASKAN—James Oliver Curwood—*Cosmopolitan.* Propaganda for Alaska, with a real mystery and a he-man love story.

THE LAKE MYSTERY—Marvin Dana—*McClurg.* Music and mystery are interwoven with an entertaining love story.

THE LOVING ARE THE DARING—Holman Day—*Harper.* Right makes might in the great north country, where Jean bravely struggles to protect the fortune and the secret of the girl he loves.

A REVERSION TO TYPE—E. M. Delafield—*Macmillan.* Had Miss Delafield examined Cecil's case from a psychoanalytic rather than an hereditary viewpoint, we feel she might have given us a more satisfactory conclusion.

TETHERSTONES—Ethel M. Dell—*Putnam.* Druidic background for a story of sweet but somewhat difficult love.

JANET MARCH—Floyd Dell—*Knopf.* Perhaps the most modern of all modern heroines moves disturbingly through this competent but annoying novel. *(See page 458.)*

LONELY FURROW—Maud Diver—*Houghton Mifflin.* A study of clashing temperaments and of tragic love—excellently done.

SMOKE OF THE .45—Harry Sinclair Drago —*Macaulay.* A typical story of the sage brush, very readable.

*THE ENCHANTED APRIL—"Elizabeth"—*Doubleday, Page.* Running away from your husband temporarily—and to Italy—is a gay enough performance if the company is female—and good.

FLAMING YOUTH—Warner Fabian—*Boni, Liveright.* Love in its different phases discussed and explained from a feminine standpoint with a frankness rather more than engaging.

SIR JOHN DERING—Jeffery Farnol—*Little, Brown.* Sword play and wandering adventure again mark this most romantic of authors' work.

QUEST—Rosita Forbes—*Holt.* An Englishwoman becomes involved in the Franco-British-Syrian muddle. More a picture of the Near East than a romantic adventure story.

*FAINT PERFUME—Zona Gale—*Appleton.* Miss Gale's attempt to combine realism with highflung love—another story of a young lady discontented with her relatives.

*THE CINDER BUGGY—Garet Garrett—*Dutton.* The Pulitzer Prize for 1923 cannot be fairly awarded without giving this grim romance of iron and steel the most careful consideration.

COMPROMISE—Jay Gelzer—*McBride.* A woman learns that it is easy to get a husband but that she must fight to keep him.

A WREATH OF STARS—Louise Gerard—*Macaulay.* The contrast between the unselfishness of the English girl and the callous cruelty of the ghouls of Venice adds a piquant spice to this love story.

FIRES OF AMBITION—George Gibbs—*Appleton.* The career of one Mary Ryan, exmanikin, who marries a Wall Street financier. Interesting, in the rapidfire manner of the magazine serial.

THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD—Philip Gibbs —*Doran.* Europe's problems and those of a difficult marriage, cleverly combined.

LORRAINE—Dorothy Foster Gilman—*Macmillan.* This fearless American girl in Singapore is supposed to possess an elflike charm, but to us she is merely irritating.

THE MUSING WANDERER—Anton Gross—*Roxburgh.* Remember the famous Cherry

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sisters whose act was so bad that it was good? By the same token, this is a good book.

A LIGHTER OF FLAMES—William S. Hart—*Crowell.* An epic of Patrick Henry that tells the story of his love and culminates in his famous speech.

*THE DARK FRIGATE—Charles Boardman Hawes—*Atlantic Monthly.* Romance and the sea and a pirate or two mark this romance by the author of "The Great Quest".

CONNIE MORGAN IN THE CATTLE COUNTRY—James B. Hendryx—*Putnam.* The fifth volume of a deservedly popular series about a boy wonder.

THE THING AT THEIR HEELS—Harrington Hext—*Macmillan.* A story of fanaticism, dealing with the strange nemesis that pursued an English family.

*THE COVERED WAGON—Emerson Hough—*Appleton.* That it served as background for the greatest of motion pictures is enough to recommend it.

*NORTH OF 36—Emerson Hough—*Appleton.* How a cattle train moved from Texas, and the adventures en route.

*WIFE OF THE CENTAUR—Cyril Hume—*Doran.* A first novel of much solidity and fineness with a lyrical beauty in certain passages. *(See page 458.)*

THE TEMPTRESS—Vicente Blasco Ibáñez—*Dutton.* A story of a most thorough vampire and her ignoble finish.

THE CIMBRIANS—Johannes V. Jensen—*Knopf.* Circling down the centuries and up to the defeat of the Barbarians at Rome, Jensen continues to prove that the Scandinavian race is the tap root of mankind.

CROATAN—Mary Johnston—*Little, Brown.* Perhaps we are in part to blame, but we do miss in "Croatan" the fresh romanticism of Miss Johnston's earlier books of Virginia.

HORATIO'S STORY—Gordon King—*Boni, Liveright.* We can understand the incompatibility of temperament that made separation from O'Flarity necessary for Rhoda, but what we wonder is: what were her actual relations with Lee?

NEVER THE TWAIN SHALL MEET—Peter B. Kyne—*Cosmopolitan.* Mr. Kyne's reputation is too firmly established for this California-Polynesian pot boiler to injure it permanently.

KANGAROO—D. H. Lawrence—*Seltzer.* A tale, with thousands of repetitious and unnecessary words as well as extraneous incidents, of a man's decision to find himself in "aloneness".

BEHIND THE BRONZE DOOR—William LeQueux—*Macaulay.* Blackmail, murder, and suicide assail the reader in every chapter.

DON JUAN — Ludwig Lewisohn — *Boni-Liveright.* In which the author of the beautiful "Up Stream" somewhat naïvely presents a Latinesque attitude toward divorce.

THE FAMILY AT GILJE—Jonas Lie—*Doubleday, Page.* The quiet drama of a simple Nordland family told with finished artistry.

*DOCTOR NYE—Joseph C. Lincoln—*Appleton.* Another lovable character in trials and tribulations and solution of them, on Mr. Lincoln's variety of Cape Cod.

THE LENGTHENED SHADOW—William J. Locke—*Dodd, Mead.* The eternal triangle—with a strong man and a tender one at grips over the same girl.

*THE DOVES' NEST—Katherine Mansfield—*Knopf.* Beautiful and dramatic short stories and sketches, in the Russian manner.

OLIVER OCTOBER — George Barr McCutcheon—*Dodd, Mead.* How a gipsy fortune teller weaves her spell over the life of an upstanding hero.

*SILK—Samuel Merwin—*Houghton Mifflin.* A romance of old China and the silk trade written with care and some beauty.

THE JORDANS — Sarah Gertrude Millin — *Boni, Liveright.* A story well able to stand alone. So why do its publishers invite unfavorable criticisms by comparing it with "The Story of an African Farm"?

OPEN ALL NIGHT—Paul Morand—*Seltzer.* Five continental adventures in femininity, deftly skimmed from the bubbles that rise to the top.

*THE PUPPET MASTER—Robert Nathan—*McBride.* Another exquisitely written little tale by the author of "Autumn". Wise and tender. *(See page 458.)*

TREASURE TRAIL—Frederick Niven—*Dodd, Mead.* Admirably descriptive is this freezing adventure tale about a hunt for a gold mine in a land of avalanches.

*BREAD—Charles G. Norris—*Dutton.* A dignified discussion of the new woman, which

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

presents a problem but does not find a solution.

BUTTERFLY—Kathleen Norris—*Doubleday, Page.* A pleasant, if too smooth, story concerning two sisters of contrasting character.

THE SABLE CLOUD—Harriet V. C. Ogden—*Penn.* Even flappers appear to possess ethics, and when these clash with the standards of their Wall Street parents the end is often comically tragic.

THE WHITE FLAG—Gene Stratton-Porter—*Doubleday, Page.* After many deaths and much troublesome incident, Mrs. Porter brings her villain and her lovely ladies to proper ends by proper popular fiction means.

*THE HAWKEYE—Herbert Quick—*Bobbs-Merrill.* The saga of a middle western editor. Well told and entertaining.

DIFFERENT GODS — Violet Quirk — *Holt.* Perhaps Sheila is an altruistic little fool and Philip too good to be true, but we'll admit we did not think of this until after we had finished the book.

ONCE IN A RED MOON—Joel Townsley Rogers—*Brentano.* The author's probable intention was to write a satire on a certain type of modern fiction. Unfortunately the book strikes us as burlesque and not very good burlesque at that.

*THE SECOND GENERATION—Anthony M. Rud—*Doubleday, Page.* A realistic and genuinely powerful novel of Scandinavians in America.

FORTUNE'S FOOL — Rafael Sabatini — *Houghton Mifflin.* After the Restoration—fighting, heroism, and the flash of footlights make a topnotch story by this always gay novelist.

THE SEA-HAWK—Rafael Sabatini—*Houghton Mifflin.* The days of good Queen Bess, when Sir Oliver Tressilian was as romantic a figure as could be wished.

THE COMINGS OF COUSIN ANN—Emma Speed Sampson—*Reilly, Lee.* A delightful tale of family solidarity down south.

THE WITCHING OF ELSPIE—Duncan Campbell Scott—*Doran.* Short stories of ruggedly taciturn Scotchmen alone in the great, open spaces—wide open for fictional purposes.

THE HOPEFUL JOURNEY—Beatrice Kean Seymour—*Seltzer.* Three generations of womanhood are skilfully depicted to illustrate feminism's slow but steady growth.

ASHES OF VENGEANCE—H. B. Somerville—*McBride.* A romance of Old France featuring sword play.

AUTUMN TRAILS—Emma-Lindsay Squier—*Cosmopolitan.* Sympathetic nature stories that you might be wise in giving to any boy or girl of about sixteen.

THE GARDEN OF GOD—H. DeVere Stacpoole—*Dodd, Mead.* A lively romance of love and adventure in the now familiar coral islands of the South Pacific.

*YOUNG FELIX—Frank Swinnerton—*Doran.* In this narrative of a young man whose "personal motto should have been something in a dead language meaning Happy in Disaster", Mr. Swinnerton has accomplished the best work of his career so far.

ANYA KOVALCHUK—Clarence Wilbur Taber—*Covici-McGee.* The sex complex of a neurotic woman.

THE AMATEUR INN—Albert Payson Terhune—*Doran.* A mystery story redeemed by the presence of a downright spinster.

BARNABÉ AND HIS WHALE—Rene Thévenin—*McBride.* A droll fantasy about a gentleman of Paris who lived in a whale, and who for a little time impersonated an eminent professor.

CANE — Jean Toomer — *Boni, Liveright.* There is a something that resounds through these Negro tragedies akin to the beat of an African tomtom at midnight in some Mississippi glade.

HIS CHILDREN'S CHILDREN—Arthur Train—*Scribner.* Several generations move their stormy way through New York social columns.

TUT, TUT! MR. TUTT—Arthur Train—*Scribner.* More amusing adventures of this delightful old Robin Hood of the bar in which he plays hide and seek with legal technicalities—always, of course, for the benefit of the weak and oppressed.

SYLVIA OF THE STUBBLES—Jewell Bothwell Tull—*Reilly, Lee.* Familiar stage properties—a little faded, perhaps, by long exposure to an atmosphere of excessive joyousness—still serve to create a sentimental background for the adventures of Sylvia, another alias of the Glad Girl.

FEET OF CLAY—Margaretta Tuttle—*Little, Brown.* A story of a mother and daughter and of how the daughter saves her own life from the ruin that encompassed her mother.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE BLIND BOW-BOY—Carl Van Vechten—*Knopf*. A clever, readable, perverse, and—to those who understand its significance—disagreeable book.

MASTRO-DON GESUALDO—Giovanni Verga—*Seltzer*. Modern letters can boast few figures as picturesque, as tragic, or as ironical as that of Mastro-Don Gesualdo, southern peasant and practical visionary.

THE MAGIC MIDLAND—Harold Waldo—*Doran*. Story of a middle western boyhood related with what the famous Spooner of Oxford would call "gust and zesto".

THE VALLEY OF GHOSTS—Edgar Wallace—*Small, Maynard*. The murdered man, the girl, the clue—very exciting but nothing new.

THE CATHEDRAL—Hugh Walpole—*Doran*. Archdeacon Brandon's life, power, and defeat, with a rich background of incident and character.

LOVE DAYS—Henri Waste—*Knopf*. The affairs of Susanna. Eleven men. Eleven days. Eleven spots of color and a quick curtain.

LUTHER NICHOLS—Mary S. Watts—*Macmillan*. The commonplace isn't necessarily commonplace, though in this book it is merely that.

MORE LIVES THAN ONE—Carolyn Wells—*Boni, Liveright*. Not many readers will be able to anticipate the well hidden solution of this murder mystery.

*A SON AT THE FRONT—Edith Wharton—*Appleton*. One of the best of the war novels, which, by the way, discusses divorce—a superb piece of psychological fiction.

J. HARDIN & SON—Brand Whitlock—*Appleton*. Paul Hardin discovers that only that which is lasting can endure. This sounds as though the book were trite, whereas it isn't at all.

THE LADY FROM THE AIR—C. N. and A. M. Williamson—*Doubleday, Page*. Williamson fans will like this romance written around an aeroplane instead of the usual automobile.

THE EXILE OF THE LARIAT—Honoré Willsie—*Stokes*. Conflict between self interest and social duty is the theme for another story with excellent western background.

*OH, DOCTOR!—Harry Leon Wilson—*Cosmopolitan*. In a tale bubbling with humor, a hypochondriac and his nurse overcome the old fear complex.

THE ABLE MCLAUGHLINS—Margaret Wilson—*Harper*. A prairie saga woven about a settlement of Scotch pioneers in Iowa of the 'seventies. Human character and virgin soil—that great protagonist of pioneering fiction—are drawn into the picture with sure, steady strokes. A worthy novel.

THE MINE WITH THE IRON DOOR—Harold Bell Wright—*Appleton*. Love and hate and a lust for gold in pure doses under Arizona skies.

THE POEMS OF THE MONTH

Selected by Stephen Vincent Benét

FROM a cautious perusal of not very many magazines, we gather the information that September, as the almanacs might say, is an excellent month for prizes and sonnets. Witness "The American Poetry Magazine", which in its August-September issue awards prizes in a lyric contest (197 entries), a mother poem contest (163 entries), a peony poem contest (223 entries), a mystic poem contest, a triolet contest, a quatrain contest. 153 hapless entries sought the prize in the narrative poem contest, but no prize was awarded—due to various insufficiencies in the material offered. Narrative verse, by the way, seems rather at a discount this year. We reprint the prize lyric (prize poems always offer such an

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

excellent opportunity for argument) with a passing and casual wonder whether any critical conclusion might be drawn from the fact that in the other contests sixty entrants preferred to write of peonies rather than of mothers.

WHEN EARTH LIFTS SKYWARD

Across the shining meadows of the dawn,
Through noon-hours, when the day strides, great and tall,
Across the hills that clasp the setting sun,
I hear you call.

In the still night when all the tenantless
Soul knows the starry bow of opening space,
And brims with bright invisible loveliness,
I see your face.

And when the earth lifts skyward, and the sky
Lowers, to rain the peril of its bliss,
Until the heart breaks with a golden cry,
I know your kiss.

Clement Wood
—*The American Poetry Magazine*

September "Poetry" contains thirty-one sonnets by Masters, Ficke, Bodenheim, Kreymborg, Marjorie Allen Seiffert, and others. We select "Youth Visits Our Inferno", because of its interesting analysis of the attitude of a generation to which elders and juniors alike seem to insist upon passing the lyrical blackspot.

YOUTH VISITS OUR INFERNO

They call this hell. With deep disapprobation
For all of us, honest sinner and lusty saint,
Our visitors find us mildewed with the taint
Of old commandments. Their new dispensation
Has come too late for us and our salvation.
They find us pitiful and rather quaint
In our inferno. . . I make no complaint,
I am happier here with all my generation.

We are damned with the knowledge of good and evil, they
Whose new estate is freedom, suffer worse
And find life empty, trivial and boring,
A sort of game that everyone must play,
And no-one knows the rules, and no-one's scoring
And nothing's at stake, for youth has lost its purse.

Marjorie Allen Seiffert
—*Poetry*

Mr. Masters adds new tombstones to Spoon River in "Vanity Fair". Louise Townsend Nicholl has interesting work in "The Measure". Robert Frost has a characteristic poem, "The Star Splitter", in the September "Century", which also contains Elinor Wylie's charming "Viennese Waltz". We wish there were something of E. E. Cummings's to quote — as we can't find anything in the magazines, we recommend the readers of THE BOOKMAN to his forthcoming book of poems. The best verse of the month seems to be in "The New Republic": two charming lyrics by W. H. Davies — a mannerly grotesque by Leonie Adams — Kreymborg — a good visualization by Joseph Auslander — and this, which seems to me the finest thing by far in any September magazine:

KING'S RANSOM

About the Emperor's thumb revolving,
Mouthed by Manchu's enamelled dragon;
Upon the damasked barge, dissolving
Within the deep Egyptian flagon;

Downcast before the swine by Circe;
Poised between double diamond prisms;
Clipped by the horse-shoe nail that hearsay
Declares a cure for rheumatisms;

If the artificer be Vulcan
Or microscopical Cellini
To set an eyeball for a falcon
Or carve a button for a genie,—

And whether cupped in gold or copper,
In frigid silver or the burly
Embrace of bronze; stained by the upper
Cloud colors, or profound sea-pearly,—

Whether consuming or congealing
In fire or salt, O never shall you
Find an enchantment for concealing
This little moon's enormous value!

Elinor Wylie
—*The New Republic*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE EDITOR RECOMMENDS—

A Polite Margot

MRS. J. BORDEN HARRIMAN'S reminiscences are filled with sparkle, charm, and observation. They range, her anecdotes, from childhood memories to keen analysis of labor conditions, politicians, womankind and, not incidentally, mankind. Occasionally she is impudent; never unladylike. There are things like this:

> Once long ago at Mrs. Willard Straight's, I overhead Leila Bryce, afterward Mrs. Gifford Pinchot, say acidly to Lady Allan Johnstone: "I certainly don't see how Daisy Harriman gets across. Surely not brains." Years afterward in the Mitchel campaign, when she and I first became great friends, she came to me with the bigness and frankness I now know so well. "You know I once said something very mean about you." "I know," I said, "I overheard you." "And you didn't hate me?" I laughed. "Of course not. I wanted to cross the room and tell you you were right." It really *is* my father's enthusiasm and interest in people and things, not brains at all that makes for whatever talent I may have. T. comforts me by saying that a hundred years from now the so-called intelligentzia that is so unhappy in America and Russia won't be considered "clever", but that intuition and enthusiasm like father's will be the very core of intelligent living. I wonder.

And like this:

> At a political meeting last autumn Mrs. Douglas Robinson bounded up and said that one reason "people" hadn't liked the Wilson administration was because they had had no faith in the men he appointed to the Cabinet. I stood up at once and said that Democrats were "people", and that Democrats had been quite satisfied with President Wilson's cabinet. Man for man, I thought they stacked up very well with those President Harding had picked out or those who had been picked out for him. Republicans had harped so many years on the subject of Wilson's cabinet that I was quite sick and tired of listening.

You can judge what a fascinating range of period there is from the following:

> Sunnyside, Washington Irving's estate, joined ours by the western meadow, and when my mother and her sisters were little girls, he made great neighbors of them. My Aunt Florence treasured greatly some verses called, "The Lay of the Sunnyside Ducks", "humbly dedicated to Miss Florence Jaffray", which Irving wrote and sent her.

The verses, and Aunt Florence's reply, follow. "From Pinafores to Politics" (Holt) is a book that teaches much concerning American life as it is lived by those who take it as a duty and a joy to accept society and become eager working members of a large and well bred leisure class.

Three Novels of Youth

CYRIL HUME'S first novel, Robert Nathan's second good novel, and Floyd Dell's third novel form an interesting trio. They deal, all of them, with the life of young people in present day America. Hume's story is frankly interpretative, Nathan's is fanciful, Dell's is even more than usually realistic. They present, in a sense, three distinct phases of that much heralded younger generation, three distinct phases — if you will not have the former phrase — of the new viewpoint. I shall take Nathan's "The Puppet Master" (McBride) first because, in spite of its slightness, I like it best. Here is the story of two dolls and two humans, nicely contrasted in terms of love. As in "Autumn", Nathan writes in clear, lucid, rhythmical prose, with bits of whimsical humor

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

here and there. His Papa Jonas and the puppet characters are drawn with quiet humor, and Anabelle Lee, the doll, is a heroine of no mean proportions. Nathan is a gentle ironist; but like all ironists in whom there is a touch of greatness, he has much tenderness when he contemplates the race of man. In one paragraph, Nathan says all that Floyd Dell really has to say about the younger generation.

> "Doctor Twine," said Papa Jonas solemnly, "you and I took over life as it was given us. We followed text, rules, manuals; and not our own hearts. I tell you that the young people to-day are following their hearts. They desire only to be honest, with others and with themselves. I like that, Dr. Twine; it does not make me comfortable, it often makes me anxious, but it fills me with hope. These young men and women are clearing the ground for those who come after. They are without respect, but that is because they have not found anything worthy of being respected. If in turn, they are not respected by those who come after them, that is their misfortune. At least those who follow will not be obliged to live an ugly life because they cannot help it. They will be free to live as they think right. They will be free to love, because they will not have to ask any one's permission."

This is a book that I should like to be sure every follower of THE BOOKMAN reads — and if you once read it, you will reread it as I do "Autumn". I go back to that fresh, lovely idyl, in these days of Freudian fiction, again and again.

"Janet March" (Knopf) by Floyd Dell is a competent novel. It will annoy many of you, many of you will think it is not true. That it transgresses the bounds of good taste I am sure; but I am afraid that it is a true picture of the sex life of young men and women of a certain section of the middle class. I am quite certain that Mr. Dell had every intention of drawing a repugnant picture in portions of his book. His Janet and his Roger, both of them, are disturbingly intellectual. Physical passion to them is only a part of their mental development. Janet, hard headed, determined, independent, is a terrifying figure. There is nothing of the clinging female in her. She accepts marriage, in the final instance, as a gesture. She is revolutionary in spirit and in action. You can see that I don't like this book. I hope that some time Dell will turn from this exaggeratedly detailed realism to write a novel in the poetical, fanciful vein in which he excels. Let's give all due praise to his ability to hold the interest, to his unusual powers in recreating a period and in making his characters live even when we least believe in them; but when he goes so thoroughly into a discussion of moral values which, to each one of us, must necessarily be personal, he must not expect to find agreement, or even liking. "Janet March" is a disturbing book. You cannot dismiss it as psychopathic, as with D. H. Lawrence or Sherwood Anderson, nor as deliberately pornographic as with Carl Van Vechten. It is too clear headed, too normal, too horribly sane. Let's get back, Floyd Dell, to being a poet, and shut down this psychological clinic!

"Wife of the Centaur" (Doran) is a first novel by a very young man. It is not a good first novel, it is a wonderful one — not as a novel but as a piece of writing, as a presentation of a viewpoint. It is the story of Jeffrey Dwyer, his love affairs and marriage. It is the story of impetuous youth, learning control, forcing itself to the demands life makes of it. Writing with force, passion, and a sure understanding of the type of youth whom he describes, Hume shows you a side of life that has been woefully neglected in recent fiction; but only because it has had no prophet. Neither

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hume nor his hero is a prig; but they are *men*. This is the Puritan viewpoint, the Roman Catholic viewpoint, the presentation of the control that is, after all, at the base of much that seems wild in the young people of today.

Apologia Pro Vita Roosevelt

LORD CHARNWOOD'S "Theodore Roosevelt" (Atlantic Monthly) is in some measure a disappointment. Written in beautiful, measured prose, with an Englishman's appreciation of a robust American figure and an Englishman's perspective on political problems, it just lacks the fire and the eagerness which, for me, should mark any essay on this man who is a hero to many and a symbol of hate to others. Perhaps it was too soon to write of him, so Lord Charnwood, in spite of assertions to the contrary, has written an apology for Roosevelt. He tries to explain that complex character, to make him consistent — but why do that? Why tame the wind, or analyze the storm? Toward the close he writes the following paragraph:

> . . . I am of course well aware of the crudity and fleeting worth of this study. But when I undertook it I made one demand — namely, that I should be amply briefed with the worst that had been said of Roosevelt. That demand has been fulfilled faithfully, and I have faithfully tried to use the material before me. I need hardly add that I have met a number of people with personal impressions, favorable or unfavorable, to give of him. I have indicated where his faults seem to me to have lain, and if I have not laid more stress upon them it is because I believe that to dwell more on these light and often laughable matters would be to draw things in false perspective. Men have fought as stoutly as he, and more wisely — seldom so consistently for the right. That is the main thing. The grosser charges that have been flung against him in no instance demand one word. Of the more intellectual and refined sort of criticism of him, I feel, to speak frankly, the prevailing inhumanity, the failure to understand those simple qualities which go to the hearts of common people, and of which the full possession is greatness, whether genius accompanies it or not.

Lord Charnwood has done his task well. No lover of Roosevelt will wish to miss this book — but he will still await the day when the great Roosevelt picture is painted in words.

What Is Criticism?

FROM two of our most respected college professors come collections of critical essays; and wise, tolerant, interesting books they are. I enjoyed practically every page of both of them. I want to quote generously from them. "In Praise of Folly" (Houghton Mifflin) by Bliss Perry of Harvard University contains the following:

> The ideal organ of literary criticism should utilize every variety of training, of conviction, and of what Fenimore Cooper called "gifts". It should have its representatives of judicial, of interpretative, and of purely impressionistic criticism. Like the Church, it should employ every variety of temperament, every range of scholarship, every pattern of personal inventiveness and initiative, every mode of discipline, and every mood of devotion. It should have its Bishops and Archbishops for the various dioceses of learning and of taste — perhaps its College of Cardinals and its Pope, for there must always be some Editor-in-Chief to keep the heretics in their proper place; — but the essential thing is that it should be a Church Militant, with daring young missionaries and explorers, bent upon the conquest and conversion of the whole Philistine world.

Brander Matthews in "Playwrights on Playmaking" (Scribner) turns his attention naturally to theatrical matters, of which he writes always at his best. Here is an interesting viewpoint:

> If American audiences are younger than they were, then they are not so rich in knowl-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

edge of the world, not so ripe in judgment. If they are also more largely feminine, then they will be different from what they have been in the days when the drama attained to its superbest expression. The tragedies of Sophocles were represented in the Theater of Dionysus before the citizens of Athens; and the spectators were all men of more or less maturity. The tragedies and the comedies of Shakspere were written for the Globe Theater in London, in which the spectators were predominantly male. The comedies of Molière were acted in the Palais Royal Theater in Paris, before audiences which included comparatively few women. It is significant that women were admitted to the orchestra seats of the Théâtre Français only about forty years ago; and that Sarcey, a very shrewd observer of things theatrical, was moved more than once to record his regret that this had helpt to bring about the more rapid dispersal of the group of old playgoers, experts in playwriting and in acting, who were wont to follow the performances of the Comédie-Française assiduously and devotedly.

And it was almost a hundred years ago that Goethe anticipated Sarcey's complaint. "What business have young girls in the theater?" he asked. "They do not belong to it; . . . the theater is only for men and women, who know something of human affairs."

But "things are what they are, and will be what they will be."

And when he analyzes humor he has said a word of great truth to the weary reviewer of plays.

This [a Weber and Fields scene] may not be witty, and it may even not be humorous, but it was funny. It provoked incessant laughter in its progress to its apex, which was greeted with uncontrollable roars. And laughter, like that, clean and simple and honest, is a thing to be thankful for. It is what Artemus Ward called "a sweet, sweet boon". It needs no apology and no explanation; it is its own excuse for being, — even if it resists classification. It is wholesome and hygienic; and as Henry Ward Beecher declared, "Whoever and wherever and however situated a man is, he must watch three things — sleeping, digestion and laughing. They are three indispensable necessities."

—*J. F.*

THE FOOL

By Hardwicke Nevin

WITH Soissons snug behind us, came the snows
Shattering our eyes of sight, but leaving sound
Intact upon our ears to mark our foes
When some of them made at us to get ground.
After the moon had shuttered down the dark,
Across the crusted snow a fellow ran,
The clown in him gone out upon a lark;
Both friend and foe, we watched him, to a man.

Not only tragedy then loosed its grips
From him whose humor had usurped the fates,
When laughter fed its benison to lips
And it had made a havoc of our hates:
But Wisdom, king of kings, was put to school,
And in his place, instead, there reigned — the fool.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CHRISTMAS GIFT BOOKS

A Selected List of New Books and Special Editions

ART AND MUSIC

A PRIMER OF MODERN ART — Sheldon Cheney—*Boni, Liveright.* A study of the period following impressionism, illustrated with half tones and line cuts.

THE ARTS MONOGRAPHS—*Duffield.* Studies of modern artists, illustrated with full page reproductions.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN THE GERMAN ARTS—Herman George Scheffauer—*Huebsch.* A description of postwar expressionism in various fields.

RENAISSANCE ART—Elie Faure—*Harper.* Volume III of "The History of Art", translated by Walter Pach. Illustrated.

HIGH AND LATE RENAISSANCE IN ITALY—Corrado Ricci—*Brentano.* Examples of architecture and sculpture.

DISTINGUISHED AMERICAN ARTISTS — *Stokes.* Small volumes containing reproductions of the work of Winslow Homer, Robert Henri, Abbott H. Thayer, and Childe Hassam.

OLD FRENCH AND ENGLISH SONGS—Illustrated by Rie Cramer—*Penn.* Folk songs with text and music, an illustration in color for each song.

FOLK SONGS OF MANY PEOPLES—Compiled by Florence Hudson Botsford — *Womans Press.* Music and translations into English by well known poets. Two volumes.

BIOGRAPHY

PIERRE CURIE—Marie Curie—*Macmillan.* The story of the discovery of radium, translated by Charlotte and Vernon Kellogg.

HIGHWAYMEN—Charles J. Finger—*McBride.* Accounts of several "gentlemen of the road", with wood block illustrations by Paul Honoré.

WOLFGANG GOETHE — Georg Brandes — *Nicholas L. Brown.* A two volume study, translated by Allen W. Porterfield.

PAUL CÉZANNE: HIS LIFE AND ART—Ambroise Vollard—*Nicholas L. Brown.* Translated by Harold L. Van Doren, and illustrated in half tone.

DEGAS—Julius Meier-Graefe—*Knopf.* An illustrated biographical and critical study by the art critic, translated by John Holroyd Reece.

QUEEN VICTORIA—Lytton Strachey—*Harcourt, Brace.* A morocco bound edition of this unconventional biography.

GODS OF MODERN GRUB STREET—A. St. John Adcock—*Stokes.* Biographical and critical studies of over 30 present day English writers. Illustrated with photographs.

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL: HIS PERSONALITY AND HIS TIMES—Newman Flower—*Houghton Mifflin.* An eighteenth century study, with many illustrations.

CONTEMPORARY PORTRAITS—Frank Harris —*Brentano.* Volume four, containing analyses of Wagner, Matisse, Charlie Chaplin, and various others.

GROVER CLEVELAND, THE MAN AND THE STATESMAN—Robert McElroy, Ph.D.—*Harper.* A two volume study by the head of the department of history and politics at Princeton.

BOSTON DAYS OF WILLIAM MORRIS HUNT —Martha A. S. Shannon—*Marshall Jones.* A biographical sketch of the American painter, with reproductions and portraits.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT—Lord Charnwood—*Atlantic Monthly.* A study by the biographer of Abraham Lincoln.

MASTERS AND MEN—Philip Guedalla—*Putnam.* Character sketches of famous persons by the author of "The Second Empire".

EDWARD LOOMIS DAVENPORT: A BIOGRAPHY—Edwin Francis Edgett—*Brimmer.* An illustrated biography of the famous American actor, by the literary editor of the Boston "Evening Transcript".

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

FROM PINAFORES TO POLITICS—Mrs. J. Borden Harriman—*Holt.* Reminiscences of American social and political life. Illustrated.

MY MUSICAL LIFE — Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakoff—*Knopf.* Translated by Judah A. Joffe, with an introduction and notes by Carl Van Vechten.

JANE WELSH CARLYLE: LETTERS TO HER FAMILY, 1839-1880—Edited by Leonard Huxley—*Doubleday, Page.* Sidelights by Mrs. Carlyle on contemporary people and events.

HARVARD MEMORIES—Charles W. Eliot—*Harvard.* Three informal essays, illustrated with photographs.

HAIL AND FAREWELL—George Moore—*Appleton.* The volumes in this trilogy are sold separately or in sets.

FIFTY YEARS ON THE OLD FRONTIER—James H. Cook—*Yale.* Memories of a western ranchman, illustrated with photographs.

THE FARINGTON DIARY—Edited by James Greig—*Doran.* Volumes I and II of the Journal of Joseph Farington, R.A., giving sidelights on English society of 1795-1804.

THE TAPESTRY OF LIFE—Raymond Blathwayt—*Dutton.* Victorian reminiscences.

MEMORIES OF MY LIFE—Sarah Bernhardt—*Appleton.* A popular edition illustrated with photographs.

MEMORIES OF THE RUSSIAN COURT—Anna Viroubova—*Macmillan.* Reminiscences of a friend of the royal family, illustrated from snapshots.

THE STORY OF MY LIFE—Sir Harry H. Johnston — *Bobbs-Merrill.* The explorer-novelist's record of achievement.

MY MUSICAL LIFE—Walter Damrosch—*Scribner.* Recollections of the conductor of the New York Symphony Orchestra, illustrated.

MY MISSION TO RUSSIA AND OTHER DIPLOMATIC MEMORIES—Sir George Buchanan—*Little, Brown.* The account, in two volumes, of the last British Ambassador to Russia. With maps and illustrations.

OLD FRENCH COURT MEMOIRS — Translated and arranged by Katherine Prescott Wormeley—*Brentano.* Memoirs and letters of noted persons, in 12 volumes.

SINGER'S PILGRIMAGE—Blanche Marchesi—*Small, Maynard.* An account of musical experiences and personalities. Illustrated.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHILD—Joseph Hergesheimer—*Knopf.* Autobiographical reminiscences, published in a limited edition.

MY GARDEN OF MEMORY—Kate Douglas Wiggin—*Houghton Mifflin.* The life story of the creator of "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm". Illustrated.

MY LONG LIFE IN MUSIC—Leopold Auer—*Stokes.* Reminiscences of the violin master concerning musical personalities. Illustrated.

REMEMBERED YESTERDAYS—Robert Underwood Johnson—*Little, Brown.* An editor's recollections, dating back to the Civil War. Illustrated.

DRAMA

SCENE—E. Gordon Craig. With a foreword and introductory poem by John Masefield—*Oxford.* The development of the theatre in Europe from classical times, with reproductions of etchings and prints.

OUR AMERICAN THEATRE—Oliver M. Sayler—*Brentano.* A survey of our playwrights, producers, actors, and problems.

MAX REINHARDT: HIS ART AND ACHIEVEMENT—Oliver M. Sayler and Kenneth Macgowan—*Brentano.* A biographical and critical study, illustrated.

ACTORVIEWS—Ashton Stevens—*Covici-McGee.* Accounts of contemporary actors and dramatists, with drawings by Gene Markey.

THE MONTESPAN — Romain Rolland — *Huebsch.* An historical drama, translated by Helena de Kay.

PLAYS OF NEAR AND FAR and PLAYS OF GODS AND MEN—Lord Dunsany—*Putnam.* Two volumes of plays, many of them familiar to Little Theatre audiences.

SHAKESPEARE: UNIVERSITY SOCIETY EDITION—*Stewart Kidd.* Eight volumes founded on the Cambridge text.

ESSAYS AND LITERARY STUDIES

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ — Arthur Symons — *Bobbs-Merrill.* Critical essays on literature, drama, and art.

THE BOOKMAN ANTHOLOGY OF ESSAYS—Edited by John Farrar—*Doran.* Essays re-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

printed from THE BOOKMAN, with informal sketches of their authors by Mr. Farrar.

THE STORY OF THE WORLD'S LITERATURE —John Macy—*Boni, Liveright.* An outline by the literary editor of "The Nation", with illustrations, index and bibliography.

GROUPS AND COUPLES—Frances Lester Warner — *Houghton Mifflin.* Informal sketches of married life.

A CALM REVIEW OF A CALM MAN—Samuel G. Blythe—*Cosmopolitan.* An estimate of Warren G. Harding, reprinted from "The Saturday Evening Post".

RUBBLE AND ROSELEAVES—F. W. Boreham—*Abingdon.* The fourteenth of "The Boreham Books"—essays and sketches on everyday subjects.

THE CHEERFUL GIVER—Samuel McChord Crothers—*Houghton Mifflin.* Informal papers on a variety of subjects.

FICTION

TYPEE—Herman Melville—*Dodd, Mead.* A 7x9½ inch volume, illustrated in color by Mead Schaeffer.

TALES OF MYSTERY AND IMAGINATION—Edgar Allan Poe—*Brentano.* A new edition with illustrations by Harry Clarke.

QUENTIN DURWARD—Sir Walter Scott—*Scribner.* Illustrated in color by C. Bosseron Chambers.

QUENTIN DURWARD—Sir Walter Scott—*Dodd, Mead.* With illustrations in color by Percy Tarrant.

THE MURRAY HILL LIBRARY — *Doran.* Leather pocket editions of contemporary novels such as "The Old Wives' Tale", "Of Human Bondage", "Nocturne", etc.

THE WRECK OF THE GROSVENOR — W. Clark Russell—*Dodd, Mead.* The sea story illustrated in color by Mead Schaeffer.

LES MISERABLES—Victor Hugo—*Jacobs.* A two volume edition, illustrated.

TWENTY YEARS AFTER—Alexandre Dumas —*Dodd, Mead.* With illustrations in color by Rowland Wheelwright.

BEAUTIFUL JOE—Marshall Saunders—*Judson.* A new gift book edition of the dog story.

LEGENDS AND FAIRY TALES

STORIES OF THE VIKINGS—Maurice Dunlap —*Bobbs-Merrill.* Seventeen folk tales, with explanatory notes, and illustrations by G. A. Tenggren.

ROBIN HOOD AND HIS MERRY OUTLAWS—J. Walker McSpadden—*Crowell.* A new edition, with color plates by Allan Stewart.

THE WONDERFUL HISTORY OF PETER SCHLEMIHL — Adelbert von Chamisso — *Huebsch.* The legend of the man without a shadow, translated and illustrated in silhouette by Theodore Bolton.

STORIES FROM THE EARLY WORLD—R. M. Fleming—*Seltzer.* Myths of twenty-four races, from Polynesia to ancient Egypt, illustrated.

THE SOUL OF KOL NIKON—Eleanor Farjeon—*Stokes.* The story of a search for a soul.

STORIES FROM GREAT OPERAS—J. Walker McSpadden—*Crowell.* The plots of nineteen operas. Illustrated in color.

HEAVEN FOLK — Waldemar Bonsels — *Seltzer.* A nature fairy story by the author of "The Adventures of Maya the Bee".

UNCLE REMUS: HIS SONGS AND HIS SAYINGS—Joel Chandler Harris—*Appleton.* With introduction by Thomas Nelson Page and illustrations by A. B. Frost and E. W. Kemble.

RILEY FAIRY TALES—James Whitcomb Riley—*Bobbs-Merrill.* Illustrated in color by Will Vawter.

HISTORY

REVOLUTIONARY NEW ENGLAND, 1691-1776—James Truslow Adams—*Atlantic.* By the author of "The Founding of New England", illustrated with portraits and facsimile documents.

THE CHILDREN OF THE SUN—W. J. Perry —*Dutton.* The study of an early civilization, based upon researches among ruins.

OUR DEBT TO GREECE AND ROME—*Marshall Jones.* Fifty odd volumes, each one tracing the influence of a writer or institution down to the present time. The authors are classical scholars of the United States and Europe.

HOWARD PYLE'S BOOK OF THE AMERICAN SPIRIT—Text by Merle Johnson and Francis

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

J. Dowd—*Harper*. A narrative beginning with the early explorers and ending with the close of the Civil War. About 150 illustrations.

RUSSIA'S WOMEN—Nina N. Selivanova—*Dutton*. An historical and biographical study.

THE LOST KINGDOM OF BURGUNDY—Robert J. Casey—*Century*. An illustrated description of the picturesque days of the duchy.

GLOUCESTER BY LAND AND BY SEA—Charles Boardman Hawes—*Little, Brown*. The history of the New England town, illustrated with pencil sketches by Lester G. Hornby.

WASHINGTON AND ITS ROMANCE—Thomas Nelson Page—*Doubleday, Page*. A narrative of the early days of our national capital.

RICHMOND, ITS PEOPLE AND ITS STORY—Mary Newton Stanard—*Lippincott*. An illustrated account by the wife of the secretary of the Virginia Historical Society.

THE PIONEER WEST—Edited by Joseph Lewis French—*Little, Brown*. An anthology of tales of early days, with a foreword by Hamlin Garland and illustrations in color by Remington Schuyler.

CHINA YESTERDAY AND TODAY—E. T. Williams—*Crowell*. An illustrated study by a professor of the University of California who has lived in China.

HUMOR

AN OUTLINE OF HUMOR—Carolyn Wells—*Putnam*. A "true chronicle from prehistoric ages to the twentieth century", with illustrative selections.

THE TRIUMPH OF THE NUT—Christopher Ward—*Holt*. Parodies, of some dozen recent novels, which appeared originally in "The Literary Review".

MISCELLANEOUS

MASKS AND DEMONS—Kenneth Macgowan and Herman Rosse—*Harcourt, Brace*. An account of the uses of false face from early days, in religion and drama. Illustrated.

ORIENTAL COSTUMES, THEIR STYLE AND COLORS—Mike Tilke—*Brentano*. With 130 illustrations.

THE BOOK OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN—Hamlin Garland—*Harper*. True stories of western Indians, with numerous illustrations by Frederic Remington.

THE CHEYENNE INDIANS—George Bird Grinnell—*Yale*. An illustrated study based on first hand knowledge.

THE ART OF CINEPLASTICS—Elie Faure—*Four Seas*. As to the movies in general, and Charlie Chaplin in particular. Translated by Walter Pach.

A CONTRAST—Hilaire Belloc—*McBride*. An Anglo-American study, based on recent impressions.

POETRY

CHRIST IN THE POETRY OF TODAY—Edited by Martha Foote Crow—*Womans Press*. An enlarged, revised anthology from American poets.

POEMS—John Masefield—*Macmillan*. A leather pocket edition in eight volumes.

THE PASSING THRONG—Edgar A. Guest—*Reilly, Lee*. The popular poems in editions ranging from cloth to leather.

THE POETICAL WORKS OF ANDREW LANG—Edited by Mrs. Lang—*Longmans, Green*. A 4 volume edition, with 4 portraits.

POEMS OF GIOVANNI PASCOLI—*Yale*. A selection translated by Evaleen Stein.

NEW HAMPSHIRE—Robert Frost—*Holt*. Narrative poems and lyrics. Illustrated.

LOVE AND LAUGHTER—Edited by Matthew Prothero—*Four Seas*. An anthology of love poetry with fantastic illustrations by Charles Child.

THE HARP WEAVER—Edna St. Vincent Millay—*Harper*. A narrative, and some familiar shorter poems.

THE RUBAIYAT OF OMAR KHAYYAM—*Dutton*. The well known Fitzgerald Version, illustrated in color by "Fish".

MODERN AMERICAN POETRY and MODERN BRITISH POETRY—Edited by Louis Untermeyer—*Harcourt, Brace*. A leather bound edition of the two anthologies.

THE OPEN ROAD—Compiled by E. V. Lucas—*Holt*. The anthology of outdoor verse, illustrated in color by C. A. Shepperson.

SONGS OF CHILDHOOD—Walter de la Mare—*Longmans, Green*. A limited edition, illustrated by Estella Canziani.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

RELIGION

THE STORY OF THE BIBLE—Hendrik Willem Van Loon—*Boni, Liveright.* An interpretation, by the author of "The Story of Mankind", of Old and New Testaments. Illustrated by Mr. Van Loon.

FOSDICK'S TRILOGY OF "MEANINGS"—Harry Emerson Fosdick—*Association.* A special edition of the volumes on the meaning of faith, prayer, and service.

THE DISCOVERY OF GOD—Basil King—*Cosmopolitan.* The novelist's interpretation of the Bible.

THE NEW TESTAMENT: AN AMERICAN TRANSLATION—Edgar Johnson Goodspeed—*U. of Chicago.* A translation into conversational English.

ENRICHMENT OF PRAYER—Edited by David R. Porter—*Association.* Prayers from the literature of all ages.

LIFE OF CHRIST—Giovanni Papini—*Harcourt, Brace.* A morocco bound edition of the former unbeliever's study, translated by Dorothy Canfield Fisher.

THE MYSTICISM OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI—D. H. S. Nicholson—*Small, Maynard.* An interpretation, with etchings by Laurenzio Laurenzi.

SCIENCE

MIND AND HEREDITY—Vernon Kellogg—*Princeton.* A study based on recent discoveries in psychology and biology.

MAN AND NATURE—J. Arthur Thomson—*Putnam.* A consideration of man and of his relation to society, by the editor of "The Outline of Science".

THE A B C OF ATOMS—Bertrand Russell—*Dutton.* An explanation of new theories of physics.

THE COMING OF MAN—John M. Tyler—*Marshall Jones.* An evolutionary study.

SCIENCE REMAKING THE WORLD—Edited by Otis W. Caldwell, Ph.D. and Edwin E. Slosson, Ph. D.—*Doubleday, Page.* A non-technical exposition of modern achievements.

TRAVEL

TRAVELS IN ARABIA DESERTA—Charles M. Doughty—*Boni, Liveright.* A new edition in two volumes, with illustrations and maps.

AMONG PYGMIES AND GORILLAS—Prince William of Sweden—*Dutton.* Hunting adventures in Africa and South and Central America. Illustrated.

BEAUTIFUL AMERICA—Vernon Quinn—*Stokes.* America's scenic wonders, especially the National Parks, described and photographed.

HILL-TOWNS OF THE PYRENEES—Amy and Thornton Oakley—*Century.* Impressions, illustrated with line drawings.

HILLTOPS IN GALILEE—Harold Speakman—*Abingdon.* Experiences of a writer and painter in Palestine, illustrated in color.

TALES OF TRAVEL—Marquess Curzon of Kedleston—*Doran.* Adventures of the former Viceroy of India in remote countries.

SEEING THE MIDDLE WEST—John T. Faris—*Lippincott.* With 91 illustrations.

MY NESTORIAN ADVENTURE IN CHINA—Frits Holm—*Revell.* A record of the Holm-Nestorian expedition, illustrated with photographs and maps.

THE ADVENTURES OF IMSHI—John Prioleau—*Little, Brown.* The acount of a motor trip through Europe and Africa. With maps and photographs.

WANDERING IN NORTHERN CHINA—Harry A. Franck—*Century.* The author of "A Vagabond Journey Around the World" covers new territory. Illustrated.

THE OUT TRAIL—Mary Roberts Rinehart.—*Doran.* Camping adventures in the American desert, the Rockies, and Florida. Illustrated with photographs.

MY JOURNEY ROUND THE WORLD—Alfred Viscount Northcliffe—*Lippincott.* A record of Lord Northcliffe's tour in 1921-2. With index and map.

WAR

THE WORLD CRISIS, 1915—The Rt. Hon. Winston S. Churchill—*Scribner.* The second volume of this study, illustrated with maps and diagrams.

AN ONLOOKER IN FRANCE—Sir William Orpen, R. A.—*Holt.* The English painter's observations at the front, illustrated with reproductions of his work.

WOODROW WILSON'S CASE FOR THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS—*Princeton.* A compilation of Mr. Wilson's arguments, by Hamilton Foley.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE BOOK OF THE MONTH

MRS. WIGGIN'S "GARDEN OF MEMORY"

By Honoré Willsie Morrow

Mrs. Morrow's review is the twelfth of a series of longer book reviews to be published each month in THE BOOKMAN. *The books discussed will not necessarily be new nor will they be books which have never before been reviewed in the magazine. The aim of the editors is to present, in the selection of volumes and reviewers, articles which shall constitute solid pieces of criticism.*

I OPENED the book with a feeling of sadness, of reverence and of tenderness. How else could one feel toward the posthumous autobiography of the mother of Rebecca, of Patsy, of Timothy and Lady Gwen, of Penelope, of the Ruggles family? And having opened the volume in this mood I read it as one always has read and always will read Kate Douglas Wiggin; with laughter and with tears and with a conviction no less firm because it was intangible that life after all might be a thing of beauty and rightness. For so this brilliant and lovable woman found life and so she made her readers see it.

The biography is intrinsically interesting. I mean that had I never read Mrs. Riggs's books, had I never known her personally, still this story of her life would have delighted me. It is filled with more adventure than is contained in all her other books put together. She herself led a life more varied, more poignant, more replete with romance than did any of her heroes or heroines. The story of her kindergarten experience in San Francisco alone would have made a wonderful novel. I wish she had written it! The account of her first tour of Europe is more exciting than any of her stories about Penelope's travels. The description she gives of the crushing of her finger in the door of a train in which she was traveling from Gratz to Innsbruck has all the makings of a melodramatic motion picture scenario. No, more than that. Of another novel with Dr. Ben's history as the central theme and the Hungarian countess as the heroine!

But there is far more than mere adventure in this book. There is a progressively interesting account of a human being's life work, of the growth of capacity for toil, of the molding and remolding of a plastic, delicate, earnest mind into form fit to withstand the buffetings of anxiety and poverty, overstrain, oversensitiveness, too great giving of self to others.

There is the account, all unconscious, of the emergence of a clean cut New England philosophy from a manysided frame of mind that might otherwise easily have developed into a mere habit of giving out wit and sympathy because people so loved these qualities in her. But delicate as was her talent, there was a curious quality of rugged morality in all that Kate Douglas Wiggin wrote; and af-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ter reading her autobiography one understands how this came to be.

Adventure, romance, work, and philosophy in this book, but more than all these, an accounting of friendships by a woman who had genius for making friends. She began, characteristically, by scraping up an acquaintance with Charles Dickens when she was about ten years old. The English novelist was on a train going from Portland to Boston. The small girl was taking the same trip with her mother. Even at this age saturated with Dickens lore, Kate crept shyly to the great man's seat, told him how she loved "David Copperfield", and the deed was done. The two talked together for hours.

From Charles Dickens, her friendships spread as the years went on until literally they encircled the earth. Kindergartners, slum mothers, actors and actresses, teachers, philosophers, poets, statesmen, novelists; the great, the wise, the foolish, the brilliant, the eccentric, the beginner, the finished success. She gave to them all of her wit and sympathy and they returned the gift to her in love.

Yes, above all else this is a book of friendships. Extraordinary! How could one person in a life all too short compass so much of that greatest of all gifts to a world too devoid of gifts! "Friendship"—as that friend of her youth, Ralph Waldo Emerson, said—"that select and sacred relationship which is a kind of absolute and which leaves the language of love suspicious and common, so much is this purer and nothing is so much divine."

The answer is not far to find. It is clear to read between the lines of this book. Partly were her friendships due to the world wide popularity of her stories. But only partly. The greatest of them were made by personal contacts, and that is where the extraordinary aspect of the matter appears. For one of the saddest things about meeting most authors is that one wishes one hadn't met them! Poor things! They put all the interesting and beautiful parts of themselves into their books. There is little left to make human intercourse with them thrilling or even interesting! Mrs. Riggs's stories were the spontaneous outpourings of an artist with great wit and a great love for her fellow beings. She might easily have stopped with the friendships made by her books and have accounted herself unusually successful. But she did not stop here. Choice as are her books, Mrs. Riggs was far more choice, herself.

Loveliness, kindliness, a power of brilliant conversation, yes; but also she had — Pshaw! Why hesitate to use an overworked word? She had the kind of charm that goes only with lovely character, and people when they met her never forgot her and wished to be with her again and yet again.

I recall vividly my own meeting with her six or seven years ago. I was editor of "The Delineator" and I wanted a Christmas story from Kate Douglas Wiggin. As a young girl, I had read and loved everything she had written. A few years before I should have been glad of any excuse that would have made it possible for me to meet a writer whose work I so loved and admired. But my editorial experience had made me wary. I wanted to keep a few of my old illusions, therefore I avoided meeting if I could authors whose works I particularly admired! And so I didn't care to meet Kate Douglas Wiggin.

But if I wanted the story I knew I'd have to make the getting of it a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

personal matter. Mrs. Riggs was not well, was writing little fiction, and was giving all the time and strength that she could to her biography. So I went to her New York home to see her.

I have a vague recollection of spacious rooms filled with books, flowers and sunlight. And a vivid remembrance of a woman crossing the room to meet me; a woman whose trailing dress made her seem tall, a woman with a delicate, tender face in which there were lines of pain and of laughter and of — of liking! I was a stranger but she was going to give me my chance and begin by liking me.

We talked for a long time, for the most part about story writing — the art of it. She was modest about her work. She might have been at the very bottom of the literary ladder. She spoke of her "little trickle of talent", of her weariness, of her desire to get on with her work, of her admiration for authors without a third of her ability. I cared for her immediately. I wanted to stay with her. I wanted to chuckle on and on at her inimitable flavor. I wanted to tell her the story of my life from the moment I cut my first teeth. But most of all I just wanted to be with her.

Charm! That uttermost gift of the gods to a human being.

And into this biography she has managed with entire modesty to weave a staccato history of her contacts with an endless number of human beings who obviously felt toward her as I did. It is remarkable that she could be so unassuming and that a simple biography could give so much of her subtle attractiveness.

She was too soon withdrawn. In a literary world full of sex and sordid details, such books as hers are like a ray of sunshine that lights one corner of an otherwise somewhat damp and sour smelling cellar. She should have been allowed to stay with us for many years, if only as a delicate and ennobling light toward which strange bleached sprouts in the literary basement might lean all unconsciously and from which they might imbibe warmth and health. But she had toiled tremendously. She suffered much pain. Perhaps for her it is better so. And for her the paragraph with which she ended her autobiography has come true:

"I am at one with the little invisible beings in the air — they who had begun as blue Flax flowers. The song is more joyous in youth, fuller and stronger in middle age; it quavers a little as the years go on and on; but the song itself is never ended."

My Garden of Memory. By Kate Douglas Wiggin. Houghton Mifflin Company.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A SHELF OF RECENT BOOKS

THE LIFE AND ART OF STEPHEN CRANE

By Ralph D. Paine

"YET here came a boy whose visual sense was unique in American writing and whose mind by some inner process had stripped itself of all respect for the prevalent theories which have cursed the national fiction. He was already an ironist, already able to implant his impressions with force and reckless of the consequent shocks to a public softened by long nursing at the hands of timid men."

In this manner Thomas Beer pays tribute to the art of Stephen Crane and excoriates the literary spirit of the generation in which he lived and wrote. This is a study in American letters of singular interest and importance. It is the first biography of Stephen Crane, although he richly deserved the honor long ago. To find adequate material was a difficult task, but a congenial one for Mr. Beer. He is of the modern school of brilliant young writers who have no patience with shams and timidities and whose self appointed duty it is to smash most of the idols of the Victorian Age.

Crane lived too soon. The fictionists are just beginning to catch up with him. He owed nothing to French or Russian influences. This rebellious youth, son of a Methodist minister in Newark, who spent his summers in Asbury Park, did indeed create his mordant, vivid phrases by some inner process that is the peculiar property of genius. His life was brief and careless. He left the scantiest material for a biographer, and yet this book portrays the man with candor and fidelity. Through its pages he moves as a wistful figure in shadows often sombre. His vision was too clear to find contentment anywhere. He knew poverty and made many enemies who told wicked falsehoods about him. They were jealous of such distinction as he won after bitter struggle and disappointment. His fame is much brighter than when he died a quarter of a century ago. It is recognized that he was destined to endure.

Mr. Beer tells you how he wrote "The Red Badge of Courage" and what the world thought of it then. An illuminating glimpse, this:

> Crane had letters of praise from Bliss Perry, William Graham Sumner, and Brander Matthews, but recognition of living art had no place in the universities of the decade and Barrett Wendell, pausing in the consideration of Restoration comedy at Harvard, told one of his students that the book was sensational trash and then resumed his sour brilliance.

William Dean Howells, the gentle realist whose aura has so soon faded, was Crane's foremost champion and overlooked his savagely outspoken condemnations of most of the great and good of that literary age. Hamlin Garland was another staunch friend who perceived that this shy, shabby youth had the gift the gods vouchsafe to few. The biographer freely expresses his own contempt for the celebrities we once looked up to. Young Mr. Beer and Stephen Crane could have passed many a rare evening together. But Richard Harding Davis, although his literary talent is called trumpery, receives credit as a knightly

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gentleman who stood by poor Crane through thick and thin, even to the extent of thrashing a man about town who repeated some vile slander concerning drink, drugs, or women.

We older men who knew Crane as a war correspondent have heard fragmentary gossip of his residence in England where he was received with higher respect than had been accorded him at home. It remained for Mr. Beer, with painstaking effort, to piece together this chapter of the story. The most memorable friendship formed was that described by Joseph Conrad in the introduction which he has contributed to this volume. He loved Crane and greatly admired his work. They first met in London as guests at luncheon of the late Sydney Pawling, the publisher. It impresses one to learn that Conrad, then a beginner in literature, regarded Crane as a master.

I had of course read his "Red Badge of Courage" of which people were writing and talking at the time. I certainly did not know that he had the slightest notion of my existence or that he had seen a single line (there were not many of them) of my writing. I can safely say that I earned this precious friendship by something like ten months of strenuous work with my pen. It took me just that time to write "The Nigger of the Narcissus" working at what I always considered a very high pressure. It was on the ground of the authorship of that book that Crane wanted to meet me. Nothing could have been more flattering than to discover that the author of "The Red Badge of Courage" appreciated my efforts to present a group of men held together by a common loyalty and a common perplexity in a struggle not with human enemies but with the hostile conditions testing their faithfulness to the conditions of their own calling. . . . It is a fact that I considered Crane, by virtue of his creative experience with "The Red Badge of Courage", as eminently fit to pronounce judgment on my first consciously planned attempt to render the truth of a phase of life in the terms of my own temperament with all the sincerity of which I was capable.

Many other friends well known to English letters visited the half ruined manor house in Sussex where Stephen Crane passed the last year or so of his life with a devoted wife to care for him. Harold Frederic and Robert Barr were particularly close to him. Henry James lived not far away at Rye. Never was there an odder association than that between the vagabondish young Crane, lawless of convention, startling of speech, despising all else than naked truth, and the elderly novelist who had become a colored and complicated ritual that demanded of spectators a reverence unfailingly accorded. People who swooned under the burden of his final method sat and sat in pleasure while that astonishing egotism bared its slow phrases in detached and charming appreciation of its own singular skill.

And yet Henry James could send the weary young impressionist five manuscripts unasked and request an opinion of them. And Crane could write to a friend: "I agree with you that Mr. James has ridiculous traits and lately I have seen him make a holy show of himself in a situation that — on my honor — would have been simple to an ordinary man. But it seems impossible to dislike him. He is so kind to everybody. . . . "

Stephen Crane: A Study in American Letters. By Thomas Beer. Alfred A. Knopf.

THE BOOK OF THE PRESENCE

By Joseph Fort Newton

LAFCADIO HEARN has a story of old Japan, telling of a dark day in a tiny village by the sea. When the people were all out working in their low lying fields, an earthquake came,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Happily one man, whose farm was on the hill behind the village, was not working beside his neighbors, and from his higher level he saw what the others did not see. He saw the sea withdraw and go swiftly back beyond all its usual limits of retreat. He knew at once that it meant the coming of a great tidal wave.

Not an instant was to be lost; the people must be gathered to the hills or perish. Hastily he set fire to his rice ricks — all the capital he had — and furiously rang the temple bell. His neighbors in the fields below heard the sound, and looked up and saw the smoke. They rushed for the hills to help their neighbor, as they thought, in his dire plight. Then, looking seaward, they saw the wild waters rushing in over the place where they had been working, overwhelming their fields and their village in ruin.

The old story goes on to tell how, after the disaster was over and the ruin repaired — the man who had done this heroic act being still alive and their neighbor — the folk of the village used to go to their temple and worship his spirit. It was as though in the saving, self sacrificing act of a neighbor and friend there had been revealed to them a swift touch and vivid glimpse of "A Living God" (the title of the story).*

In much the same way men are now wont to think of Jesus, in whose swift and gentle years they see "the human life of God", revealed, as Turgenev said, in a face "that looked like the face of all other men, just a common human face". No wonder we read His life anew, seeking the source of that stream of sweetness and light — and lightning! — which entered the world with His advent. Today, as never before, men ponder His words — fresh as the dew and bright with color — simple as the prayer of a child, yet profounder than all philosophy, finding in His truth a clue to an else ambiguous, if not disheartening, existence. No other such words have been spoken in the open space between the earth and the sky.

Papini, dramatic, volcanic, stormy — he of the staccato style and the stiletto pen — did make the whole world think about Jesus, calling us back from a wisdom that is not wise. Glover, Findlay, and others — quiet scholars and humble disciples — with the insight of love and learning have shown us the real, human Christ in the atmosphere and scenery of His time, in habit as He lived the Life that interprets life. Poets, tellers of tales, and writers of plays have followed His footsteps, until we can almost see His face, His gesture, His smile, and hear the tones of His voice as He taught on the hillside and by the sea. It is all a part of a tendency Christward, and away from the hideous gods and gospels which have muddled our faith and misled our life.

And now, almost simultaneously and quite independently, we have three new translations of the New Testament, the story of Jesus and the literature created by the impress of His personality. Taken together they make a rich gift to our generation, as much to the plain man who wants to know what the Master said in words he can understand as to the scholar who will revel in new felicities of phrase and niceties of insight. In all three there is an effort to escape from the unnatural form in which the Gospel has hitherto been printed — "its dim and crowded gray pages" — which accounts in part for much of the neg-

*This story was recently recalled by "The British Weekly" in an editorial essay, albeit for a different purpose.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lect to read it. Moffatt alone keeps the old verse divisions on the margin, while the other two let the Teacher and His Apostles speak to us in format, as well as the style, of our own time.

Each of the three translators is keenly aware of the difficulties of his task, of the sacred rivalry of the King James version, whose stately antique diction is entwined with the holiest memories of our hearts. Yet they freely depart from it, sacrificing association to clarity and intelligibility, and therein they are right. Of course any translation from one language to another "is like playing on the piano what was written for the violin". Even when the motif and fundamental melody are preserved, subtle effects are missed and haunting overtones are lost. But we are making gains betimes, and one can hardly turn a page of any of these new translations without finding an old passage in a new setting, or an old text retouched until it glows like a star to light our way.

If we set the three translations side by side, we have a version of the Gospel simple but not cheap, popular but not colloquial, achieving literary beauty without academic stiffness, making the most modern of books real and vivid in the living language of living men. They give one the joy of great work greatly done, in a spirit worthy of so noble an enterprise, and for such things we give thanks. Of the three, it is not too much to say that Moffatt is the ripest and the most finished, with a grace of form and a brooding beauty of phrase all his own. His work is a model of accuracy, a marvel of insight, at once a translation and a transition, in which many echoes of the old high melody are caught and bidden to linger in the more direct and familiar speech of our day.

Almost any text taken at random and read in all these translations is like turning a gem over and over and watching it flash and sparkle from many facets. Take the Authorized Version of the words of Jesus in the Gospel of St. Luke: "In your patience possess ye your souls." The Revised Version of 1881 restored this text to its original force. "In your patience ye shall win your souls." Bishop Westcott thought all the work of the revisers well spent, had the only result been to secure this slight change. With which agree all three of the translations under notice, and together they lift the words out of the commonplace into the altitude and atmosphere of Jesus.

For, slight as the change may seem, it marks the distance between the faith of yesterday and today. Stated starkly, it is the difference between the soul as a treasure to be kept and a trophy to be won, between life as a possession and life as an adventure. The Gospel is not a soft, cushioned faith, a refuge for the timid, a shelter of frail and lovely things. It is a challenge to the heroic spirit of youth, a quest and a conquest to stir the blood and make the heart beat faster, a risk, a wager, a Divine foolishness; not a stick of candy but a stroke of lightning: "By your heroic patience you will purchase your souls!"

The Final Version of the New Testament is among the things to be awaited—the infinitely slower and more difficult translation of truth into life. Alas! the Grand Style is as rare in life as it is in literature, but now and then some heroic saint flashes upon us the wonder of what life might be. We shall have to wait much longer before we know how that great translation will read in the lives of men and nations. Today only a few

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

words — here a line and there a stanza — have been wrought into action. We are in the beginnings of the Life of Jesus. Low aims blur the page, low ideals turn the Divine poetry into dull and unmusical prose.

For such a task we shall have need to return again and again for cleansing, for comfort, and for command, to "the book of white samite, mystical and wonderful", where the sweet Voice is heard and the Vision dwells. There, in a Life duplicate of our own but disinfected of the evil that makes us hateful to ourselves and others, we find the Way of the eternal life in time, and the Truth that makes all other truth true.

The New Testament, A New Translation. By The Reverend Professor James Moffatt, D.D., D.Litt. George H. Doran Company.
The Riverside New Testament, A Translation from the Original Greek into the English of To-day. By William G. Ballantine. Houghton Mifflin Co.
The New Testament, An American Translation. By Edgar J. Goodspeed. University of Chicago Press.

FLAYING THE NEWSPAPERS

By James Melvin Lee

AN excellent lay sermon could easily be preached from the text, "The Wages of Sin is Publicity". The newspaper is no exception to the rule, whether its sins be those of commission or those of omission. "Some Newspapers and Newspapermen" by Oswald Garrison Villard is a book of newspaper sermons from the text given in the opening sentence of this paragraph.

Mr. Villard comes from a family that has always stood for the highest ideals in journalism. He may be a weeping Jeremiah over what he believes to be the rapid decadence of the press, but he has a message. Like the prophet, Habakkuk, he prints it so that he who reads may run.

Headline conciseness must tell the contents of his book. Mr. Villard boldly asserts that the news of the New York "Times" can pass only the quantitative, not the qualitative test. In discussing William Randolph Hearst, he recalls Lowell's question, "Why should a man by choice go down to live in his cellar instead of mounting to those fair upper chambers which look toward the sunrise?" Of the New York "World" he says, "It remains the nearest approach to a great liberal daily which we have in America and as such its owners and editors are deserving of high praise." He sees Mr. Munsey as "a dealer in dailies — little else and little more".

He charts Boston on the newspaper map as a journalistic poor farm. "The Christian Science Monitor" of Boston, to which he gives a separate chapter, he fears is long going to be classed as "somewhat colorless", rather "dull" and "monotonous", and that it "will be without the shining edge of the sword of the Apostle". On the other hand, he finds rays of hope in the two newspaper "Suns", which shine in Baltimore, "two of the best, bravest, and widest-awake newspapers in America".

To him, the Philadelphia "Public Ledger" is a newspaper "without a soul". In a competition as to which is America's worst newspaper, he believes that the Chicago "Tribune" would be a most promising entry. In contrast to the two "Suns" of Baltimore, the Kansas City "Star", in his opinion, is "a waning luminary". The New York "Herald"—to quote the concluding phrase of the chapter on the Bennetts and their newspaper—is

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"part 'Sun' and part 'Herald', without the great characteristics of either".

In viewing with alarm the editors of today, he points with pride to Godkin and to Garrison, the editors of yesterday.

In his first chapter, Mr. Villard remarks that I am a facile historian of journalism who has preferred not to use the ethical measuring stick. I may, then, be pardoned for asking a few ethical questions. Doubtless, Mr. Villard would condemn the practice of putting yesterday's date line on foreign correspondence that came by mail, in order to create the impression of freshness in news; but how does this practice differ from dating the preface of his book October 1, 1923 when I saw a copy on September 15, 1923?

If the New York "Times" is a capitalist class paper, what does Mr. Villard mean when he publishes in "The Nation" the assertion that the "Times" prints the best labor news in New York City? If, as he asserts, the "Times" fawns at the feet of the rich day in and day out, how does he explain the Stillman scandal on the first page of the "Times"?

If the evening edition of the Philadelphia "Public Ledger" told in nearly half a column about the indictment of the Gimbels for profiteering in certain articles of food, would Mr. Villard, as a newspaper man, say it was ethical for the morning edition the next day to sell the same news to its readers a second time? If so, how does the case differ from the silence of the New York "Evening Post", under Mr. Villard's ownership, when "Collier's Weekly" won in the libel suit brought by the Postum Cereal Company?

Would Mr. Villard like to have me give names and dates when newspapers in New York attacked the New York "Herald" for the insertion of immoral advertisements in its personal columns? They can be furnished in spite of what is said on page 278 of the book. I could keep on asking similar questions—not in a spirit of malice but just to show how easy it is to be critical. Critics, like newspapers, make mistakes.

Yet the American press needs critics like Mr. Villard. It ought not object to pitiless publicity for itself. Just as an editorial writer may conscientiously support with his pen minor things with which he does not agree when he is in sympathy with the big things for which his paper stands, so a reviewer may endorse a book in the main though he disagrees with many of the points made in the text. Any book that makes newspaper readers more critical will elevate the standard of American journalism.

Some Newspapers and Newspapermen. By Oswald Garrison Villard. Alfred A. Knopf.

A W. H. HUDSON TRIO

By Henry A. Lappin

THESE three books are the last fruit of a noble tree, the final harvest of one of the wisest, simplest, and most beautiful of modern pens. Two of them, however, will not augment Hudson's fame. "Ralph Herne" and "Fan" are novels, and belong to the first, tentative period of his auctorial career. The former, now published for the first time, was written before 1885, before "The Purple Land", as the author himself informs us in an almost indecipherable autograph letter reproduced in facsimile as an introduction to this comely limited edition.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Fan" was published in 1892, pseudonymously, in an edition of only three hundred copies. A short time before his death Hudson seems to have thought of forbidding the reissue of it on the ground that it was unworthy of his reputation.

Many pages of "Fan" recall the early work of George Gissing, whom Hudson must have read and known during the 'nineties. The first chapter, for example, is exactly in the key of "Workers in the Dawn", and chapters 39 and 40, in which Fan rediscovers her old friends Constance and Merton, and Merton airs his sociological views, are pure Gissing. The early Gissing falsetto—itself an infelicitous derivation from one of Gissing's masters, Dickens—is clearly audible in such a collocation as " . . . an occasional visit to the rougepot and other artificial means used by civilized ladies to mitigate the ravages of time". And this: "She was also a dressy dame and burdened her podgy fingers and broad bosom with too much gold." In many other passages the style definitely "dates". Thus the utterly priceless Miss Starbrow rants like the heroine of a Dion Boucicault melodrama: "Oh what a poor weak vile thing I am! No wonder I hate and despise women generally, knowing what I am myself—a woman! Yes,—a very woman,—the plaything, the creature, the slave of a man! Let him only be a man and show his manhood somehow by virtue or by vice, by god-like deeds or by crimes be they as black as night, and she must be his slave", etc. The creator of Rosa Dartle and Lady Dedlock poured out that sort of thing from a horn of plenty, but it was not all he poured. Then there are persiflagitious exchanges like this: "'I am very glad, Arthur, that you and Mary are such good friends.' 'I am so glad that you are glad that I'm glad', he returned airily, quoting Mallock."

Hudson's mastery of the art of prose is indisputable, but he was not and never could have made himself a novelist. Yet, if one's tastes are simple, it is possible to derive a mild and tranquil satisfaction from this unpretentious story of a young girl's life, of her rise from squalid poverty to affluence and social position. Certain paragraphs very delicately evoke rural and suburban atmospheres, and there is an exquisite bird song movement on pages 186, 187, that should be included in any representative anthology of the author's prose.

"Ralph Herne" is a much briefer tale. The setting of the story is Buenos Aires whither the hero, young Doctor Herne, has emigrated from London in the expectation of more rapid advancement in his profession. A year or so after his arrival in the South American city, the hero, depressed by his failure to realize his hopes, begins to behave quite unheroically, and speedily loses his medical standing and, to all appearances, the esteem of the girl with whom he has fallen irrevocably in love, despite the fact that she is betrothed to another. (I trust the reader will not resent this Victorian method of expression.) The young man's regeneration is at length triumphantly achieved and his local fame is made, when he emerges as the hero of the terrible Buenos Aires yellow fever epidemic. To be sure, Lettice, the young lady just mentioned, is one of the few survivors of that dreadful time and the concluding paragraph begins: "Sixteen years have gone by since their marriage." "Ralph Herne" is hardly more than an earnest and decorous Later Victorian novelette ("The Redemption of Doctor

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Herne" shall we call it?). In one of his less inspired seasons Trollope could have turned it out in the mornings of a week; all of it, that is, except the handful of strangely powerful pages which depict the pestilence stricken city; and perhaps one should include some of the earlier descriptions of Buenos Aires and the neighborhood. But Trollope would have added some of his well known spices to the dish, and indeed "Ralph Herne", had the author of "Ralph the Heir" written it, would have been a better *story*.

"A Hind in Richmond Park", which the author left unfinished, was prepared for the printers, and in some degree reconstituted from the manuscript, by Morley Roberts, Hudson's oldest friend and comrade. It is a collection of essays and papers upon "a variety of questions concerning the senses", composed for the most part toward the end of Hudson's life. While the book deserves a high place among the most characteristic and delightful of this great writer's works, it is not, as several reviewers have suggested, his best. Doubtless that distinction must be reserved for "Nature in Downland", which is probably the most vital as it is certainly the most subtly poetical of the volumes which display Hudson's experiences and reflections as field naturalist. The hind in Richmond Park plays but a small part in the book upon which it bestows a name. The author's observations of the hind in chapter the first set him meditating upon the senses of animals, and soon he finds himself comparing the senses of animals and of men. By and by he is gamboling merrily—"a hind let loose"—through the sunlit glades of his memories and thoughts and dreams, his mind advancing surely and beautifully through the rich mazes of his subject.

Professional naturalists and students of science should learn much from "A Hind", but it was not written for them. It was written—as everything by Hudson has been written—for artists. And it is the artists who, having gone forth to spy out the land of this last major work of Hudson, and to see if it be fat or lean, will return after seven days with pomegranates and figs and a cluster of grapes that craves to be borne between two upon a staff. Hudson himself was artist first and foremost; the tale of his successive publications is almost the tale of his development as artist. His best writing is always that of one in whose veins—to use the lovely phrases of Thomas Traherne—the sea itself floweth, who is clothed with the heavens and crowned with the stars; whose passion for the visible world burns so hotly and brightly that he is "covetous and earnest to persuade others to enjoy it". Hudson saw everything as a child sees it, emotionally: his soul went out to meet what he saw. And thus "A Hind in Richmond Park", like all the ampler works of its author, is rich in rapture, in beauty, and in wisdom.

Ralph Herne. By W. H. Hudson. Alfred A. Knopf.

Fan: The Story of a Young Girl's Life. By Henry Harford (W. H. Hudson). E. P. Dutton and Co.

A Hind in Richmond Park. By W. H. Hudson. E. P. Dutton and Co.

SCIENTIFIC IDEALISM

By Kenneth M. Gould

WE have been surfeited with autobiography of the great and the near great. This Freudian itch for self revelation seems to attack

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with special malignancy the successful immigrant, and perhaps not without warrant. For the mutual impact of two diverse cultural traditions renders incandescent, like the cathode rays in a Crookes tube, elements invisible in either alone. Michael Pupin's Serb background is more fruitful of this contrast than Edward Bok's Dutch, if not so much so as Ludwig Lewisohn's German Jewish. But Pupin is far more kin to Bok than to Lewisohn in the sheer *savoir-faire* of his American rise. He had the profitable faculty of getting acquainted with "the best people". He had the fundamentally American virtues of industry, optimism, individualism, nationalism, and adaptability. He took things as he found them — the Franklins, Hamiltons, and Lincolns of American political legend, the Vanderbilts, Rutherfurds, and Carnegies of American plutocratic fact. Neither Tolstoyan pacifism nor Marxian economics could divert him from the lodestar of tangible physical science. That Pupin should be for forty years *persona grata* with the president and trustees of Columbia University is as natural and explicable a phenomenon as the opposite condition of a Sinclair and a Lewisohn.

From his graduation day in 1883 (he completed his naturalization the day before), nine years after he landed at Castle Garden without friends or money, Pupin's success was assured in whatever academic branch he should elect. He had the choice of fellowships in letters and in science, and one of his cronies in the greenhorn factory days — Bilharz, a German anti-materialist — had steeped him in a love for Gregorian chants and Homeric poetry. Had Pupin chosen the Olympian path, the world would have lost a brilliant physicist and gained perhaps an indifferent classicist. For, while the poetry of science radiates from his pages, his style has few flashes of creative art. It is verbose, at times tediously repetitious. The best passages are the narratives of Idvor, his native Serbian village, and of his early struggles in the New World.

The direction of Pupin's scientific bent was determined at Cambridge and Berlin, through contact with a few great personalities, some of them already dead: Faraday, Tyndall, Clerk-Maxwell, Helmholtz, Lagrange. It was his yearning over the question "What is light?" that finally brought him to the feet of Faraday, as interpreted by Maxwell in Britain, Helmholtz in Germany, and initiated him into the mysteries of electromagnetism. From it he passed to the study of Hertzian waves, upon which Marconi based his researches, paving the way for contemporary radio art. These varied aspects of the cosmos found their ultimate *raison d'être* in the "new" or electron physics of which Thomson and Rutherford at Cambridge are the world's leading exponents — the theory that all matter is composed of particles of positive and negative electricity circulating at incredible speed. Electronic theory has permeated every phase of physical science today. In a high vacuum tube it led to the X-rays of Roentgen. In substances like uranium and thorium it taught Madame Curie the secret of radioactivity. In the gravitational pull of the sun on starlight, it gave Einstein a clue to the general relativity theory.

Pupin was intimately connected with all this development of the past thirty years. Many of its principles in the electrical field he deduced and first applied. He invented an electrical "resonator" for adjusting the capacity

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of a condenser to varied frequencies — the direct ancestor of the tuning knob on your fireside radio. He made the first X-ray photographs for surgical use in America by a shortened exposure process which he never patented. The Pupin inductance coil which made possible cheap long distance telephony he sold to the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, while the Marconi Company bought the rights to his wireless inventions.

"The main object of my narrative", says Dr. Pupin, "is to describe the rise of idealism in American science." By *idealism* he means the motive which informs the work of the "pure" scientist, in distinction from the commercial or applied; which built the Cavendish Laboratory at Cambridge and the pioneer American research centre at Johns Hopkins; which gave America men of the true lineage of Newton and Faraday in Henry, Gibbs, and Rowland. In an age when technology is in the saddle and the plaudits of the crowd go to the Edisons and the Bells — while the men whose patient digging out of theoretical mathematics, mechanics, and electricity was the essential prelude to the great inventions are forgotten — Pupin still holds aloft the banner of truth for truth's sake. In his own person he unites both sides of the shield, and the world is slowly coming to realize that the line between them is imaginary. The birth of the National Research Council and similar events give color to the hope that before long society will consciously share its surplus with research in "pure" science. For his sturdy championship of that ideal, Michael Pupin deserves his place among the immortals.

From Immigrant to Inventor. By Michael Pupin. Charles Scribner's Sons.

MR. ASQUITH TAKES THE STAND

By Charles Seymour

DESPITE the prejudice against war books which the booksellers insist upon, the statesmen continue to publish their memoirs. Within five years of the close of the war we can read accounts of its inception by the French and British Prime Ministers, the Chancellor of the German Empire and the Kaiser, the Prussian Foreign Secretary and the President of France. Never before have the materials of history appeared so soon after a capital event. But the very fact of the readiness of the chief participants in the crisis of 1914 to describe the part they played, diminishes the historical value of their memoirs, for in every case they are obviously incomplete: the statesmen authors are willing to tell the truth as they see it, but they are by no means willing to tell all the truth as they know it. This is especially true of Entente statesmen, and Mr. Asquith's revelations are about as carefully circumscribed as those of Viviani or Poincaré.

This does not mean that Mr. Asquith's book is not important nor that any person desiring to understand the genesis of the war can afford not to read it. If it seems exaggerated to say that no other book can transcend this one in importance, it is equally certain that a reasoned and on the whole convincing defense of British foreign policy written by the Prime Minister is of the first significance. Whatever disappointment the reader may experience arises merely from the fact that Mr. Asquith uses so much of his available space in arguments based upon the impressions and records of others rather than in autobiograph-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ical retrospect. Thus an entire chapter of peculiar interest to Americans (that upon Mr. Page and Colonel House) is founded on excerpts from Mr. Hendrick's "Life and Letters of Walter H. Page", which is certainly an illuminating but not a comprehensive nor final authority, for it pictures conditions merely through the eyes of Mr. Page and his biographer. Similar use is made of the works of Haldane, Poincaré, and Ballin. Mr. Asquith's utilization of such material is skilful and his appeal to our sense of logic cogent; his book gains thereby something of the value of a critical history, designed to call into service a variety of sources, but it loses in value as a memoir. The discussion of Sir Edward Grey's policy in 1914, before and during the crisis, is admirable in tone and bearing, probably the best that has thus far been published, but one looks in vain for new light on the cabinet discussions that led to the attempted *détente* with Germany and which finally settled the question of peace or war.

On the other hand, Mr. Asquith does contribute new material on two points of the greatest importance. He has exposed ruthlessly the lack of basis for the Kaiser's thesis of the encirclement of Germany, and he has explained with adequate documentation the attitude of the British Cabinet on the problem of preparations for war just before 1914. The Kaiser alleged that in 1897 a "Gentleman's Agreement" was concluded between Great Britain, France, and the United States, stipulating that in case "Germany or Austria or both of them should begin a war for the sake of Pan-Germanism [sic], the United States should at once go to the support of these powers with all its resources." Mr. Asquith not merely emphasizes the utter inadequacy of the authority upon which the Kaiser based his assertion, but has taken the trouble to secure from the British Foreign Office, the Quai d'Orsay, and the United States Department of State a formal denial, resting upon official investigation of the archives, that such an agreement was ever concluded.

He has also given us a clear analysis of the delicate position in which the British government found itself between 1908 and 1914, and his account must elicit some admiration for the manner in which the Cabinet made the essential preparation for the war they feared but which obviously they so ardently hoped to prevent. He emphasizes the labors of the committee of defense and the understanding with the Dominions. Not to have undertaken such preparations would have been the most criminal neglect for, "we were often conscious that we were skating on the thinnest ice and that the peace of Europe was at the mercy of a chapter of unforeseen and unforeseeable accidents." But he shows also how impossible it was to make real military preparations without disturbing the political atmosphere to an extent that was likely to precipitate the very war they wished to avoid. "If the English had raised an army in 1912", wrote Mr. Page, "and made a lot of big guns, Austria would not have trampled Serbia to the earth. There would have been no war." This, Asquith insists, is "something very like claptrap". In these chapters he is at his best, and it is fair to say that they provide the clearest and most complete justification of British policy during the critical years that has been printed.

The Genesis of the War. By the Right Honourable Herbert Henry Asquith. George H. Doran Company.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

RECENT BOOKS IN BRIEF REVIEW

IT is quite the expected thing for young cynics to laugh at William Lyon Phelps because he is so given to enthusiasms. Then, too, he has a habit of neglecting the books young cynics cling to. Yet even cynical youth should be able to read "As I Like It" (Scribner) without too much gnashing of teeth, for the book has a quietly insistent charm—and even cynics may be susceptible to that. Professor Phelps explains in this collection of unclassified comments, which appeared in "Scribner's Magazine", that he is regarded as an enthusiast because he does not care to advertise, even by adverse comments, the books he thinks people should not read. His courage shows itself in insisting upon the recognition of current books which other reviewers pay no attention to. Even though one quarrel with him about these and other things, his pleasing conversation makes a good evening, and his latest book is just that.

Downing two birds with one stone is the achievement of Dr. Walter E. Traprock, F.R.S.S.E.U., in his latest effusion, "Sarah of the Sahara" (Putnam). The victims of this burlesque are the now unboundedly popular wild tales of desert love and war, and the pseudo-Egyptological stories that draw their inspiration from the recent discovery of King Tutankhamen's tomb; both "get theirs". El Sheik Traprock, Dhub of the Moplah Tribe, outsheiks all his colleagues in recent fiction; and no beauty can approach that of his desert rose, the flaming Lady Sarah Wimpole. Hair raising adventures are everyday fare for these two—abductions and rescues fairly trip over one another's heels. Discoveries—botanical, zoological, and archæological—occur with characteristic frequency. And if laughs are substituted for "thrills", shall we not rejoice at the exchange?

In "The Malady of Europe" (Macmillan) M. E. Ravage writes an excellent diagnosis but falters when asked to furnish a prescription. To abandon the metaphor, here is an interesting and highly diverting description of how irresponsible diplomats led the unwilling peoples of Europe into a war—and how America tumbled in. The entertainment and diversion come in the form of such paradoxes as: "America sought a peace without victory; she got a victory without peace", and "The European chaos is rooted and sustained not so much in war as in the peace which concludes the war." The author carefully distinguishes between the wicked chancelleries and the righteous populace. If he had gone further and heeded Dr. James Harvey Robinson's warning against personifying the nations, he would never have printed such speeches as the one in which Russia is represented as telling America reasons for making peace and warning the innocent sister against the villainous diplomats of Europe. To have eliminated these and other speeches would have been a lamentable concession in the interests of accuracy. "The Malady of Europe" bears the same relation to history that Mencken's "The America Language" does to grammar.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Even if life be a serious matter, there seems to be no good reason why the delightful levity of Stephen Leacock should not have its place. No matter how dreary the prospect, Leacock's cleverness seems to bring a temporary forgetfulness of unavoidable dinners and unattainable peace. "Over the Footlights" (Dodd, Mead) contains some of the funniest stuff this man has done. For the most part he travesties all the recognized forms of drama, and he does it in such a way that anyone who has ever been to the theatre must, it seems, laugh. To be most appreciated these pieces should be read aloud, for there is an added enjoyment in hearing one's own laugh echoed.

Whatever his faults, the late Colonel Roosevelt had one trait which everyone, even his political enemies, will admit was unaffected. If he had a leaning toward gallery play he did it in all seriousness; never did he apologize. In "The Americanism of Theodore Roosevelt" (Houghton Mifflin), a collection of articles and sketches edited by Hermann Hagedorn, this dominant characteristic is flung full into the face of the reader. Here, one finds in the intangible what Roosevelt was in the tangible. Whether he is writing about Africa or preparedness, religion or international relations, he is the same Roosevelt—the explorer, the writer, the soldier, and the politician; never any of these separately. The articles show conclusively that while Roosevelt was a manysided man he was not a many-faced one. Perhaps this is one of the things that beat him in the 1912 elections.

"A Romance of the Nineteenth Century" (Appleton) has been skilfully woven about letters and papers of Viscount Esher by his grandson, C. H. Dudley Ward. Not only is the story itself interesting and told with charm, but it offers close, informal views of famous personages of the great and little Napoleonic periods.

Most of Paul Rosenfeld's "Musical Chronicle (1917-1923)" (Harcourt, Brace) consists of articles published originally in periodicals; nevertheless the subjects are still topical, since they include composers who are still composing, conductors who are still conducting, general tendencies illustrated by individual works, and the general *milieu*. In fact there is hardly a contemporary of any importance or distinction who is not discussed, and usually with extraordinary intuition—though hence not always with accuracy.

Essays that celebrate the joys of the simple life seem to us to exhibit their greatest charm when read on a chill November day in a heatless city apartment. To the accompaniment of a radiator that sizzles in the ineffective manner of radiators the world over there is endearing melancholy in the drone of bees. Against strident bursts of city noise the strange cries of wild birds mean sanity and freedom. These are, alas, fleeting moods, but we lay them to the gentle persuasive prose of "The Magical Chance" (Houghton Mifflin). Men like Dallas Lore Sharp live close to the beating heart of nature; they write with a common simplicity and directness about life. Occasionally poetry disturbs the quiet jogtrot of the essay, and often humor quickens its pace. But the most potent quality of the book is in the author's deep conviction that "life offers a magical human chance" to all who have an open mind and an understand-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing heart. No detail in the great pattern is too crude or insignificant to be considered, if we look upon it from the true angle of perspective and with the narrowed kindly eye of intelligence.

In "The Life of Lord Rosebery" (Doran) E. T. Raymond has given us a critical, carefully drawn picture of one of the most enigmatic and interesting figures in nineteenth century English politics. Lord Rosebery's life was a brilliant series of contradictions and triumphs never quite achieved. Though he gloried in and never forgot his noble birth, "it might almost be said that his political life opened with a campaign against the order to which he belonged. It closed with a fierce denunciation of the one successful assault on the powers and privileges of that order. Lord Rosebery's road between these two points", continues Mr. Raymond, "was scattered with discarded ideals, and he arrived at the end of the journey with but one surviving enthusiasm, his passion for the Empire." The causes of this political instability the author does not undertake to explain. He merely redraws for us Rosebery as the world saw him —the brilliant, whimsical, eloquent, unsatisfactory, but always very "noble lord" whose failure remains one of the unsolved riddles of history.

The first collected book of verse of Wallace Stevens, laureate of the intellectual gymnasts, has been issued under the title "Harmonium" (Knopf). The volume is polychromatic in substance and format. Mr. Stevens has a highly individual argot, a unique pungency in conveying sense impressions, and a gay diablerie in arranging grotesque word patterns which seem quite liberated from time and space and prosody and all other ills to which the flesh is heir. The luxurious fancy and esoteric symbolism of the poems are strengthened, rather than enfeebled, by a mild infusion of metaphysics. One feels sure that Mr. Stevens will be not in the least disgruntled when the reviewer confesses that "Harmonium" was intelligible to him only when he fell upon this line:

> That prose should wear a poem's guise at last.

To that small minority of American citizens who were not born in the Mississippi valley, the middle west, seen through the eyes of its young Jeremiahs, has gradually taken on the aspect of an empire of materialism, doomed to cultural stagnation. In all this symphony of despair the flute notes of Vachel Lindsay are heard with some difficulty; it requires the observations of a seasoned traveler, a delver into the richly storied past of city, town, and countryside, to picture this section, the real America, in its true perspectives. Such a one is John T. Faris, whose "Seeing the Middle West" (Lippincott) opens vistas of natural beauty as lovely as they are unexpected. If anyone doubts that the "ota" states may boast scenery as weirdly beautiful as Colorado, let him look at the dozens of splendid illustrative photographs of these too little known regions. And for those who still hold that the only fascinating history of our commonwealth was enacted in the neighborhood of Boston Common there are scores of tales linking the middle west with the most romantic being that ever stalked the plains — the American Indian. In its two hundred and fifty pages Mr. Faris's book covers thousands of square miles of plain and hill, and it would seem that there is hardly an acre that cannot return a colorful past.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mark Twain's fame may not be enhanced by the sketches and articles collected in "Europe and Elsewhere" (Harper), yet the volume offers much to interest and amuse the lover of the great humorist. Although parts of the book are as delightfully comic as one could anticipate, Twain shows himself largely in his more serious aspect; he shows the earnest, thinking face that looks forth from beneath the mask of satire and burlesque. He may not always be at his best when he deserts his comic muse, but he is always worth reading and readable; and, even while preferring his humor, one feels thankful for some of the serious pieces gathered together in this collection, for they provide a clear and accurate clue as to the mind and personality of the man.

When Lionel Johnson in 1892 ventured to speak his mind upon Thomas Hardy, he produced a piece of criticism so solid, so finely interpretative, so balanced by scholarship and enlivened by the appreciative faculty of an authentic poet, that it has weathered thirty-one years without "dating" and is generally recognized as holding a permanent place in our critical literature. Such acknowledgment of the weight of "The Art of Thomas Hardy" (Dodd, Mead) is reflected in the printing of this new edition, with a supplementary chapter on the poetry by J. E. Barton, a bibliography by John Lane, and two portraits of Mr. Hardy.

The Fourth Dimension opens up vistas beyond human conception, yet vistas fraught with fascinating possibilities for him who would view them imaginatively. Claude Bragdon makes this amply apparent in his latest volume, "A Primer of Higher Space" (Knopf), wherein he attempts not only to show the actuality of a Fourth Dimension but to indicate what it implies. Although narrower in range and less poetic in treatment than the author's previously issued "Four-Dimensional Vistas", this book will serve excellently as a guide for one who desires to make his first acquaintance with higher space. Mr. Bragdon's style is as lucid as his difficult subject will permit, and the unavoidable obscurities of the text are mitigated by a series of plates that are both original and graphic.

In his "Economics of the Hour" (Putnam), J. St. Loe Strachey, editor of the English "Spectator" and author of "The Adventure of Living", makes a plea of much eloquence and some sense—if you overlook his false premises as of no importance—for individualism, independence, and freedom, as he would have us believe for "all living". Waste energy and waste mentality go by the board with him. For one thing, he doesn't seem to realize that more manufactures are most likely to mean less man power left for agriculture; for another, that more money and shorter working hours in return for heightened efficiency on the part of the employee will not mean unmixed blessings, unless education raises and clarifies the laborer's ideals. In contrast, Mr. Strachey's condemnation of the many abuses of labor unions, his inquiries into commerce, national debts, a levy on capital, unemployment, and "Charity, True and False", will repay the most careful consideration. As a whole, Mr. Strachey topples though. His "calm authority" rests on the indefensible premise that production, not consumption, is the basis of living; his "tolerance and sanity" fail to observe the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

no less than horrors of manual and mental waste inherent in the present expensive "creating of a demand" for this or that article, whether medicine or poison to its purchaser; he doesn't stress a cent's worth the horribly expensive deterioration of brain power inevitable within any mere mechanical occupation. Mr. Strachey's salutations to "the working mothers of England", his preaching "character" to England's (and America's) "fathers", cannot possibly avail anything. Men mechanized cannot hear sweet songs!

It is surprising that more good poetry has not come from our convents and monasteries. Certainly, the thoughts of these men and women devoted to contemplation must find verbal expression. Possibly, much that is written within the walls is not published. If such is the case one can well rejoice that "Knights Errant" (Appleton), the work of Sister M. Madeleva of the Congregation of the Holy Cross, has been printed. One would expect these poems of a nun—religious in subject, simple in phrasing, with an unsophisticated dignity and quietly deep emotion. What one may be surprised to see is that they are written in the modern verse idiom, a mode of expression entirely consistent, however, with the subject matter.

Arthur Ponsonby may be allowed to summarize his own book, "English Diaries" (Doran). Says Mr. Ponsonby in his preface: "I have not set out to select the best diaries or even only good diaries. My object has been to give a full representation of all shades of diary writing, long and short, historical, public and private, good, bad and indifferent." The scope of this book is enormous; it covers English diarists like a tent from the sixteenth century to W. N. P. Barbellion, whose sensational "A Last Diary" appeared as recently as 1921. The method is a combination of narrative, interpretative comment, *précis*, and direct quotation. On the whole it is highly successful, for it carries on with the fluidity of fiction, and no hint of the pursed lips of the literary historian.

With no signs yet apparent that there will be an end to the dissemination of knowledge by outline, we come to "An Outline of Humor". Potential readers will be perplexed as to whether "An Outline of Humor" is a joke book or a monograph, for it is edited by Carolyn Wells and published by E. P. Dutton and Company. It is both and neither. There is an extended treatment of the theories of humor, historical analysis of ancient and modern humor, and separate divisional treatment of seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth century humor in all Christian countries. This gives the book its merit for the student. There is, too, generous quotation to illustrate the historical development. This gives the outline the effect of an anthology, removes the stigma of scholarship, and will win for it an honored place in the inglenook.

"Social Ideals in English Literature" (Houghton Mifflin) was first published in 1898. Shaw, Wells, and Galsworthy have necessitated a new chapter on the moderns, this one as well as the others being the work of Vida D. Scudder. There is no particularly evident critical faculty shown in this book, but there is a clearly written analysis of the social beliefs of the whole English literary gallery. The author of this study digs into the books of famous men to unearth the nuggets of conviction underlying plot and char-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

acter sketches. Those who read the men discussed hardly need this guide, but for persons seeking an exposition of the trend of social thought since men wrote in English, here is an easily read and understood volume.

"Parties and Party Leaders" (Marshall Jones) is a large book, the contents of which must be obvious from the title, prepared by Anson Daniel Morse, late professor of history at Amherst. Professor Morse takes up his subject with expected academic thoroughness, to such an extent, in fact, that it is for students rather than for casual readers. There is a tremendous amount of information here. Dwight Whitney Morrow has written the introduction.

Unquestioning faith in Will H. Hays is behind the optimistic chapters written by Edward S. Van Zile and published under the title "That Marvel—The Movie" (Putnam). The book describes in glowing terms the part that the moving picture is destined (in the author's firm belief) to play in civilization. The volume is described in its subtitle as "a glance at its reckless past, its promising present and its significant future". Mr. Hays has written an introduction, just as glowing.

Frederik Poulsen jumps back over the last few decades to offer delectable European reminiscences. "Travels and Sketches" (Knopf), translated from the Danish by someone unnamed, is unusually pleasant. There is flavor in every chapter—a mellow flavor of yesterday that can be found in so few postwar books. The story of the beer drinking German students and that of the amorous Polish noblewoman stand out among all the rest, but each one is good. It is strange that work presented so well should be published without credit to the translator.

For the stodginess of the average "Opera Guide", Newman Levy's "Opera Guyed", with pictures by Rea Irvin (Knopf), affords a delightful antidote. It may be commended especially to the serious opera lover; and its happy rhymes, couched in the colorful argot New York speaks but does not, as a rule, write, summarize the leading scores of the repertory ("Tristan", "Pelleas and Melisande", and "Tosca" are treated with the same cheerful irreverence) with a wit and humor that captivate. Perfect Wagnerites as well as others who speak of opera with bated breath, will no doubt be shocked, notably at a "Walküre" in the best *kosher* idiom, but the shock should be a salutary one. Even though they see in it a profanation, however, none, to use one of its author's own picturesque lines, should miss it for "such a damn fool cause as that".

The most attractive binding and illustrations of "The Lure of Amateur Collecting" by George Blake Dexter (Little, Brown) counteract with some effectiveness the slightly forbidding title. As a matter of fact, the book is composed of stories and incidents gathered during a life of collecting and travel. Some are very interesting, all are clearly and pleasantly told; but the reader is inclined to fear that even as does the book, so this occupation must grow rather dull occasionally. Especially if one did not have the almost miraculous luck and gift for forming important acquaintanceships which the author undoubtedly possesses. Most of the objects are of considerable value, and many are now in various museums. The silver clasp, which is

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

perhaps least important from that point of view, has much the most delightful history.

It is too bad that Jay G. Sigmund does not write worse verse. It would then be possible to say that he does not soar on "Pinions" (White). As a matter of fact, the volume is not a great contribution to the stock of modern poetry. The poems are by no means devoid of interesting phrasing; they show evidence of close observation; they display the author's ability at versifying. One is entitled to demand that a book of serious verse be more than this.

"The Human Side of Fabre" (Century) seems an inadequate title. For Fabre, to us, not merely had a human side but was all-human. That quality has been to a large extent the charm of the man and of his work; through it the humblest of insects was humanized. But Percy F. Bicknell in this book (apart from its title) has done a very good piece of work. Fabre, his work, his interests, his personality are delightfully portrayed for us, and with easy continuity. The story is told largely in Fabre's own words and though some of it has appeared in other volumes it is all an essential part of this book as well. All Fabre admirers—and they are legion—will want to own Mr. Bicknell's study.

There is real amenity in Zephine Humphrey's account of how she and "Christopher" took up life according to nature's simple plan in a Vermont farmhouse. "Mountain Verities" (Dutton) she calls her chronicle of postwar rural housekeeping, and her discoveries include self discovery, discovery of the unsung joys of the kitchen, and of her husband's charming catholicity in culinary and other domestic emergencies. The current literature of domestic contentment is slight enough in bulk, and Zephine Humphrey performs timely service in affirming the possibilities which still inhere in a life by one's own fireside.

The aim of Paul Landormy's "A History of Music" (Scribner) seems to be merely to give at least one opinion for every one of as many names as possible; and this aim seems also to have guided the translator, Frederick H. Martens, in his supplementary chapter on music in America. The book is therefore crowded with personal opinions, arrogant, patronizing, or, in the case of French composers, sentimental. Its obvious French bias gives us on the one hand a valuable account of French music, and on the other a treatment of German music that is almost ludicrous; so that we are not wholly surprised to find, on page 356, that "with regard to the value, abundance and variety of its productions, France to-day takes first rank among the musical nations of the entire world."

When an author makes a point of saying at the beginning of a book of light essays that all the sketches contained therein are wholesome, we confess to a sinking feeling as regards their possible humorous content. Wholesomeness is one quality, in our opinion, that has no relation to humor; with all due deference to Dr. Frank Crane, Walt Mason, and Bruce Barton, we contend that humor should be less helpful and more amusing. For that reason, "Why Don't You Get Married" (Doran) seems to us to fall short of the ideal that such writers as Leacock and Cobb have set for us. It is not so much that Norris Hodgins lacks the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

persuasiveness of the first rate humorist, but that he mixes with his humor the too often platitudinous counsel of the writer of newspaper sermonettes. And yet, there are chuckles enough in this book with the sardonic title, especially in pieces like "On Buttons", in which the author describes the distraught commuter rushing for his morning train feeling that he has buttoned those things which he ought not to have buttoned and left unbuttoned those things which he ought to have buttoned! The drawings by Robert E. Johnston are both decorative and funny, and rather too sparsely scattered through the book. One could wish that the author, like his illustrator, had put his best foot forward.

Dr. Jessie Wallace Hughan's "A Study of International Government" (Crowell) begins with a somewhat hasty survey of the historical foundations for the League of Nations. Yet even the hastiest survey of various past schemes, notions, and practices, from primitive relationships down through the Greek amphictyonies, mediæval theocracy, and so on, is worth recommending to the attention of all League worshipers everywhere. A sound, inevitable treatise that puts all open minded people face to face with the failures, jealousies, encouragements to imperialism inescapable in any all but all-powerful, permanent Council dominated by five momentarily victorious nations, this book offers the only tenable advice easily deducible: education, simplification of industries; even those last foes of violence and selfishness generally—love of one's neighbor and a will to peace.

The whimsical sentence, "Going up from London to East Anglia in spring is travelling back from May into April", takes us straight into the semi-archaic, semimodern flavor and inner precincts of H. J. Massingham's "adventures on English Coasts, Heaths, and Marshes, and also among the works of Hudson, Crabbe and other country writers" that comprise his "Untrodden Ways" (Dutton). Whether or not all these paths of the spirit among books, birds, and life generally have been trodden or at any rate approximated by Richard Jefferies, Thoreau, Edward Thomas, Hudson, and others matters not at all to the lay reader. This is no book for the professional reviewer. This is a rare wine, to be leisurely sipped!

Tragedy in the hands of the inexpert becomes humor; humor handled by those who know it not becomes tragedy. This sage remark is prompted by a reading of "The Outline of Everything" (Little, Brown) by "Hector B. Toogood", with a "critical survey of the world's knowledge" by "Sir J. Arthur Wellswater, R.A., H.G.", and an introduction by "Hughe Jawpole". The book is, as the name indicates, an intended burlesque of the numerous "outlines" that have been done in the last few years. One or two funny things are said in the book, but the average for humor is low. Herb Roth's pictures are far better than the text.

"Harvard Memories" (Harvard) is the product of press agenting de luxe, The book contains three speeches by Charles W. Eliot, and numerous illustrations. It is a worth while departure from usual college catalogues. Potential freshmen, fed on Harvard traditions from infancy, and faithful graduates, dieting on the same traditions in old age, should all like it.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE BOOKMAN'S MONTHLY SCORE

Compiled by Frank Parker Stockbridge, Life Member of the American Library Association, in Cooperation with the Public Libraries of America

In a scrutiny of the reports of librarians, it often happens that the scrutineer finds more interest in the "also rans" than in the titles which actually achieve a place among the ten elect from month to month. One approaches the task of compilation with certain anticipations. This or that book which ranked eleventh or twelfth last month surely will have crowded out some of the older titles by this time; or there is a new book which, by all the rules of the game, ought to leap at once into popular favor. Sometimes it happens that way, but as often it does not, leaving the commentator wondering why.

For the past three months, for instance, "The Hawkeye" has come so near to making the score that a difference of a single point has, on two occasions, been all that kept this book out. As the reports were tabulated for September and for October, so many librarians gave "West of the Water Tower" high rank it seemed certain it would fall among the first ten — until the actual figures were added up.

Then one turns to the general list, notes the persistence therein of the old standbys — Wells, Bok, Robinson, and the rest — and concludes that, after all, all's well with the world! — F.P.S.

FICTION

1.	Black Oxen	*Gertrude Atherton*	BONI
2.	The Mine with the Iron Door	*Harold Bell Wright*	APPLETON
3.	The White Flag	*Gene Stratton-Porter*	DOUBLEDAY
4.	The Alaskan	*James Oliver Curwood*	COSMOPOLITAN
5.	His Children's Children	*Arthur Train*	SCRIBNER
6.	The Covered Wagon	*Emerson Hough*	APPLETON
7.	The Enchanted April	*"Elizabeth"*	DOUBLEDAY
8.	Faint Perfume	*Zona Gale*	APPLETON
9.	The Cathedral	*Hugh Walpole*	DORAN
10.	One of Ours	*Willa Cather*	KNOPF

GENERAL

1.	Life of Christ	*Giovanni Papini*	HARCOURT
2.	Life and Letters of Walter H. Page	*Burton J. Hendrick*	DOUBLEDAY
3.	The Goose-Step	*Upton Sinclair*	SINCLAIR
4.	Etiquette	*Emily Post*	FUNK & WAGNALLS
5.	A Man From Maine	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER
6.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
7.	The Americanization of Edward Bok	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER
8.	Up Stream	*Ludwig Lewisohn*	BONI
9.	The Mind in the Making	*James Harvey Robinson*	HARPER
10.	Beasts, Men and Gods	*Ferdinand Ossendowski*	DUTTON

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IN THE BOOKMAN'S MAIL

DEAR SIR:

With no pretension of being anything but a tired business man, may I raise my nose from the grindstone long enough to emit a long, loud and (I hope) effective hoot against the review of Dr. G. Stanley Hall's "The Life and Confessions of a Psychologist" by Dr. Joseph Collins? There is at least no partiality in my opinion for neither of these learned doctors are known to me except through their writings. It so happened that I had just finished reading Dr. Hall's book when the review of it in THE BOOKMAN came to my attention.

I know this is no place to discuss the rights and obligations of a reviewer but certainly one of those obligations is to tell us something of the book reviewed as well as something about the author as an author. With trifling exceptions Dr. Collins does neither. He prefers to devote himself to venomous jabs at the author's personality and reputation. For some reason (unknown to me) he has apparently been nursing a grudge against Dr. Hall these many years and he determines to satisfy that grudge in columns that were lent him (and, I imagine, paid for) by THE BOOKMAN for an intelligent review. This, I maintain, is not advancing the cause of literature or of criticism or even Dr. Collins's personal reputation. And now that we are on the subject of personal character it might be helpful to note that Dr. Collins saves his choicest epithets to hurl at that innocent playboy of the psychological world—psychoanalysis. Without attempting to be discourteous it seems to me that Dr. Collins himself has a complex against psychoanalysis and its advocates. We can even go one step further and say that the evidence in his review seems to stamp the complex as an inferiority one. Whatever it is, it has the doctor by the throat and destroys his ability to give us what we are looking for—a sane review of a serious, interesting autobiography by a trained psychologist of the first rank.

The effect of my squawk will be minus zero, I know, but if a reader ever owes an author some support, it ought to be when he feels the author is attacked unfairly and his work unnecessarily belittled. Perhaps this is one way by which we can repay to authors the obligation under which they place us when they give us as much information, stimulation and pleasure as Dr. Hall's book gave to me.

Yours very truly,
ERNEST G. DRAPER.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BOOKMAN:

THE BOOKMAN contains much that interests me from month to month and I am hoping that you can enlighten me somewhat as to this "realism" which occupies so high a place in our present day literature.

I am neither old enough to be convention-bound nor young enough to have no values. Yet the books I have been reading for the last three years or so have sorely puzzled me. "Brass", "Cytherea", "Babbitt", "West of the Water Tower"—to name a few which particularly annoyed me—these books are acclaimed as high examples of realistic art. Yet I cannot understand. Art is beautiful.

Are these books beautiful? Is there anything beautiful about them? I did not find it. Why is it that the only "real" things are the unpleasant and sordid details of life which our realistic authors portray with such searchlight effect?

I have lived a certain number of years full of the experience of living—joy and pain and hope and bitterness inextricably mingled. Were only the evil, the unhappy experiences "real"? Was I not living when I came to those high moments which every life holds?

Why should realism confine itself so entirely to the unpleasant and unbeautiful moments of life? Why are only the sordid, physical experiences of living "real" and worthy of an artist's efforts? I am hoping you can answer these questions for me. I must be wrong somewhere. Where?

Very truly yours,
MARIE R. CALDWELL.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BOOKMAN:

The review of "Bread" under "The Editor Recommends—" in the October BOOKMAN interested me. I agree with you that the lines are well drawn. After all I suppose that that is the real test of a novel.

However, I cannot altogether agree with you that Mr. Norris strikes the problem of the woman in business at the root. Would not most women above the age of 35 agree with Jeannette Sturgis that business without marriage is a failure? Would they agree though that it is necessary to make a choice between business and family life? Is not the real problem how woman can keep business and not have to give up the fulness of family life?—well nurtured children included.

Yours very truly,
CLAUDE L. PEAKE.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

To The Editor of The Bookman:

There came a time when indifferentism flew from me and sacramental-like I felt a conversion, all half-loves I discarded and swore eternal fealty to books. "I'll be a bookman", I said "world without end." It came about by bibliotherapy in disabled ex-service men's hospitals.

There is a spiritual value to literature, and many plunged into the Scylla and Charybdis have turned, as the flower to the sun, to the great consoler — books. In the Veterans Bureau hospitals thousands have felt the first love for books; others, backsliders, have been reconsecrated; but more important, the efficacy of books in "chasing the cure" is immeasurable.

I know not the lucky person who coined the term *bibliotherapy*. It may be of recent circulation. I was vain enough to think I started it on its career, in a hospital magazine. But the librarian showed me where Kit Morley in a mighty line had used it in his "Haunted Bookshop". Another librarian said that a naval officer first used it. Matters not who coined it. We have the thing itself, and in the many disabled men's hospitals throughout the nation it has been given a "local habitation and a name".

The archives would give bibliotherapy a solid historic base, unfold choicest material, making the past at least secure. Three pretty cases we all know: Over all the world are Jesuit schools. And this order was the leading principle in the great counter reformation, known as the "Catholic Reaction". The influence of this religious society commands many pages of history. It all sprang from a disabled soldier who took bibliotherapy, Ignatius Loyola, an illiterate Spanish grandee. Parkman in his "History of the Jesuits in North America" says: "It was an evil day for the newborn reformation when a French artilleryman fired the shot that struck down Ignatius Loyola."

John Stuart Mill, Saint Michael of the world woman's movement, confesses in his "Autobiography" to a season of cimmerian darkness, a total eclipse, a Hamlet-like gloom, he was "sicklied o'er by the pale cast of thought". He had had no time for what he called "the amenities of life" — no room for anything but ratiocination and the utilitarian, and for what Carlyle called the "dismal science".

There was a reaction to it and Mill was nearly lost. Bibliotherapy saved him, the poetry of Wordsworth, he went through some form of a conversion. He had lost his way and found Wordsworth who led to the path as Virgil led Dante. Henry Cabot Lodge, in a charming essay, has set down his debt to books as fine comrades in a hospital experience.

Thousands of disabled ex-soldiers have benefited from bibliotherapy. A chart kept at the library in Hospital 60, Oteen, N. C., shows that seventy-five per cent of the monthly issue of books are read by bed patients, and seventeen per cent by ambulatory patients, eight per cent by the hospital personnel. This speaks the value of libraries for disabled soldiers, sailors, and marines. The American Legion has noted well the value of books as therapy for men suffering from the accidents and shocks of the late great war.

Any indifference toward the libraries when introduced in the Veterans Bureau is gone, and bibliotherapy has received the imprimatur of all concerned; it is awarded equal rating and given a high place with all other therapy; it is now an integral part of the Bureau's therapy.

The library is the successor of the American Library Association which performed such good work in the World War, and thousands of the books were delivered by the A.L.A. to the Veterans Bureau. The library is really a friendly inn in these hospitals; its spirit is that of the great free spirit which animated the Great Republic during the war. The American people have since crawled into their shells and pulled their shells in after them. Not so in the friendly inns. They are not sepulchral, no signs meet the eye: "Silence is requested." They are not sacrosanct, but succulent retreats for the expansion of the spirit. The librarians are good fellows who understand soldiers and are not bored with them, and they are not afraid to laugh. Mrs. Grundy would never do for a librarian in the disabled ex-service men's hospitals. Her catty precisianism would be fatal to the torn nerves of the men. The friendly inns are supposed to be for therapy, and a high shrill voice and a spinsterish severity is not a good nervine, not at all soothing. The inns have an Elizabethan breadth and broadness. And, attention, they smoke in them.

And I loved the friendly inns. I was marked "bad order" some sixteen months ago and sent to Veterans hospitals for repairs. I am their champion, since they in their humility (the affliction of all literary persons), will not advertise themselves. Of all people librarians are a selfless race. Their head at Washington — of these friendly inns — is still known as "Library Specialist". Why not call her: "Chief of Library Service in Veterans Hospitals"?

. . . I wish some literary magazine, delivered as some must now be, from the phobia of "war stuff", would, in a monarch's voice, cry throughout the nation the worth of libraries in the Veterans Bureau, money well spent, for bibliotherapy.

Sincerely yours,

Frank Kane.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE BOOKMAN'S LITERARY CLUB SERVICE

Believing that clubs will welcome an outline which combines range of subject with an authoritative understanding of the end to be achieved, the editors have brought together representative committees of authors, students, and critics to present for the use of women's clubs an outline which will contain both elements. The divisions of the series are: I. Contemporary American Fiction (see THE BOOKMAN *for October, November, December, 1922, January, 1923); II. Contemporary American Poetry (see* THE BOOKMAN *for March, April, May, June, July, August, 1923); III. Contemporary American Drama; IV. The Short Story. After contemporary American literature has been covered, programs on the historical background of our literature will be given and these will be followed by a survey of the English field.*

The BOOKMAN *programs are formed, not by the editors of this magazine but by a board of advice which has been organized to include names from various lines of literary thought in America, so that the result will represent no one group. The executive committee of advice is as follows: Mary Austin, the novelist; Dr. Arthur E. Bostwick, librarian of the St. Louis Public Library; Dr. Carl Van Doren, one of the editors of "The Century"; Hon. Maurice Francis Egan, diplomat and literary critic; Mrs. L. A. Miller, chairman of literature, General Federation of Women's Clubs; May Lamberton Becker, of the "Reader's Guide" of the New York "Evening Post"; Dr. Joseph Fort Newton, rector of the Church of the Divine Paternity, New York City; Booth Tarkington, the novelist; and Rose V. S. Berry, chairman of the fine arts committee, General Federation of Women's Clubs.*

The Editor of THE BOOKMAN *and his advisers and associates will answer promptly and to the best of their ability any question confronting any literary club. Such questions should be addressed "*THE BOOKMAN'S *Literary Club Service".*

THE BOOKMAN inaugurated its study program of contemporary American drama, in the November issue, with data concerning Augustus Thomas, Owen Davis, Edward Sheldon, and Eugene O'Neill. In preparing this outline, the committee has met several difficulties. In the first place, there are innumerable dramatists whose work should be examined for an understanding of the real theatre of America. Though they may have written only one play, they indubitably belong in any such study list. In the second place, how should these dramatists be divided? As writers of comedy, of tragedy, of poetic drama? This we tried; and found it far from satisfactory. Alphabetical arrangement brought many a dull program. The older dramatists; the younger dramatists? The women; the men? These did not give us enough variety. The result is that the arrangement has been purely arbitrary. In each group presented we hope that you will find an interesting afternoon's study.

A word of warning. Many clubs when they study the drama are likely to stick closely to what is generally known as "closet" drama, often historical or poetical dramas by intellectuals of one sort or another whose plays have seldom been produced with success. We urge you not to sniff at the commercial theatre. It is, after all, the root of drama. If you would understand the technique of the theatre, you must know Avery Hopwood and George M. Cohan as well as Eugene O'Neill and Percy MacKaye.

For each of the following dramatists we give a selected list of her published plays, as well as the names of any easily procurable magazine articles dealing with her and her work. As a general bibliography the following books are suggested:

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

References

The British and American Drama of To-day. Barrett H. Clark. HOLT.
The Changing Drama. Archibald Henderson. STEWART KIDD.
The Modern Drama. Ludwig Lewisohn. HUEBSCH.
The Drama and the Stage. Ludwig Lewisohn. HARCOURT, BRACE.
The Twentieth Century Theatre. William Lyon Phelps. MACMILLAN.
Seen on the Stage. Clayton Hamilton. HOLT.
The Theatre of Tomorrow. Kenneth Macgowan. BONI, LIVERIGHT.
Our American Theatre. Oliver M. Sayler. BRENTANO.

Anthologies

Chief Contemporary Dramatists, First and Second Series. Thomas H. Dickinson. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.
Representative American Plays. Arthur Hobson Quinn. CENTURY.
Contemporary American Plays. Arthur Hobson Quinn. SCRIBNER.
Representative Plays by American Dramatists, Volume Three. Montrose J. Moses. DUTTON.
Longer Plays by Modern Authors (American). Helen Louise Cohen. HARCOURT, BRACE.
Modern American Plays. George P. Baker. HARCOURT, BRACE.

CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN DRAMA

Committee: Kenneth Macgowan, Chairman; Owen Davis, Jesse Lynch Williams, Alexander Woollcott.

Second Group

SUSAN GLASPELL

The Inheritors. SMALL, MAYNARD.
The Verge. SMALL, MAYNARD.
Plays: Including *Trifles; The People; Close the Book; The Outside; Woman's Honor; Bernice; Suppressed Desires* (with George Cram Cook); and *Tickless Time* (with George Cram Cook). SMALL, MAYNARD.

An expert technician in her shorter plays, in her longer efforts she has become rather turgid and involved, even though there is power in these inchoate psychological, almost psychopathic dramas. "The Glory of the Conquered", a novel, was her most successful book.

Susan Glaspell was born at Davenport, Iowa. She took her first degree at Drake University, and later postgraduate work at the University of Chicago. She has been much interested in the Little Theatre Movement. Most of her plays were originally presented by the Provincetown Players company. George Cram Cook — author, playwright, producer — is her husband.

"These eight plays have a literary quality and a somewhat philosophical viewpoint that make them as readable as stories. Miss Glaspell writes in a crisp, descriptive style and she shows keen insight into the underlying human motives. 'Trifles' is a really great play." — INDEPENDENT, December 11, 1920.

"The publication of Miss Glaspell's collected plays at last lifts them out of the tawdriness of their original production and lets them live by their own inherent life. That life is strong, though it is never rich. In truth, it is thin, only it is thin not like a wisp of straw, but like a tongue of flame." — *Ludwig Lewisohn,* NATION, November 3, 1920.

REFERENCES:

Susan Glaspell. Ludwig Lewisohn. NATION, November 3, 1920.
Miss Glaspell's Vision of Life. M. H. Hedges. NATION, April 4, 1923.

ZOE AKINS

The Magical City. FORUM, Vol. 55 (1916), p. 507.
Déclassée (and Other Plays). BONI, LIVERIGHT.
Greatness. Included in *Déclassée and Other Plays.*

One of the most successful of our women playwrights, Zoe Akins started her career in

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

literature writing poetry. Her first play was a poetical drama, "The Magical City", one of the finest things of its kind in our native literature. She is at her best in fantastic comedy, with a note of whimsical sentiment. She writes her plays constantly and rapidly. As soon as she has a scenario in mind, the actual spinning out of the dialogue is simple.

Zoe Akins was born in Humansville, Missouri. She was educated at home and in private schools. She lives now in New York City, and any season which does not bring forth at least one of her plays, and generally more, is a most unusual one.

REFERENCES:

(Interview.) J. Van Doren, THEATRE MAGAZINE, February, 1922.

RACHEL CROTHERS

A Man's World. BADGER.
The Three of Us. FRENCH.
He and She. Included in *Representative American Plays.*
Nice People. Included in *Contemporary American Plays.*

This writer of occasionally brilliant social comedies has been much interested in the ordinary problems of American family life. Her plays are likely to be argumentative in tone, yet they present fairly faithfully the set of characters which she uses often, the upper middle class family.

Rachel Crothers was born at Bloomington, Illinois, and was graduated from the Illinois State Normal School. She lives now in New York City, where she produces and directs her own plays.

ALICE BROWN

Children of Earth. MACMILLAN.
One Act Plays. MACMILLAN.

Alice Brown is better known as a novelist and a writer of short stories than as a playwright, although her "Children of Earth" won the Winthrop Ames $10,000 prize in 1915. Her mood is completely New England. She writes psychological studies of the farm folk she knows; and their little trials and troubles, after reaching great proportions in finality, form the basis for her tragedies.

She was born at Hampton Falls, New Hampshire, and was educated in private schools. A gentle, quiet woman, she seems now definitely a part of the Boston tradition, quietly and thoroughly of New England. Her latest published book is a long narrative poem, "Ellen Prior" (Macmillan).

"A New England play ['Children of Earth'] possessing strength of conception and merit of style, but its frame is less satisfactory than its spiritual content." — SPRINGFIELD REPUBLICAN, May 4, 1915.

"Miss Brown's dramatic writing in general is not 'literary'; that is to say, not closet drama. Characterization, dialogue, situation, suspensive interest, and genuine climax make her work practicable drama." — *Richard Burton,* LITERARY REVIEW, December 3, 1921.

ZONA GALE

The Neighbors. Included in *Wisconsin Plays.* HUEBSCH.
Miss Lulu Bett. APPLETON.

Zona Gale is primarily the novelist, but several of her books are so complicated that they seem almost to be plays in themselves. She has a fine sense of the dramatic. Her own dramatization of her novel, "Miss Lulu Bett", won the Pulitzer Prize for the best play of 1920. She is at work on several other plays, among them a dramatization of "Faint Perfume".

Miss Gale was born at Portage, Wisconsin, and was graduated from the University of Wisconsin. She was for some years a journalist both in the west and in New York City. Her "Friendship Village" stories proved successful; but it was not until she wrote "Birth" and "Miss Lulu Bett" that the critics gave the highest praise to her work.

REFERENCES:

The Literary Spotlight. Anonymous. BOOKMAN, April, 1923.
Literary Club Service. BOOKMAN, January, 1923.
(Life and Work.) K. Sumner. AMERICAN MAGAZINE, June, 1921.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FOREIGN NOTES AND COMMENT

A! nay! lat be; the philosophres stoon,
Elixir clept, we sechen faste echoon.

TWO years ago, the Dano-Norwegian publishing house of Gyldendal offered a prize of 70,000 Danish crowns ($18,000) for the best novel of an idealistic tendency written by a Dane or a Norwegian. Each manuscript was to be submitted by March, 1923, under an assumed name. There were no other conditions. The announcement of this prize, one of the greatest, if not the very greatest, that has ever been offered for a single literary creation, at once set the northern tongues a-wagging. Many, particularly in Norway, for the emphasis seems to have been laid from the beginning on the Danish side of the matter, doubted the advisability of such lavishness on the part of a publisher. It was claimed that—but there is no use rehearsing the objections that were raised, for the world is the same everywhere and it is thickly populated with objectors. Once the excitement incident to the thought that someone would eventually draw this handsome check had subsided, the gentle reader, with the austere critic in reserve, began to guess who would win.

As was to be expected, the prize went to a relatively obscure writer (he has never been heard of in the United States), Johannes Anker Larsen, for his novel entitled "De Vises Sten" (The Philosopher's Stone). It was released on September 19, in an edition of 20,000, nearly all of which had been sold before the work left the printer's hands. Swedish, Finnish, English, American, Dutch, German, and Czech-ish editions are to be brought out as soon as the translations are available. From September 19, 1923 on, then, and for an indefinite period, J. Anker Larsen takes his place among the ranks of those who have written "world literature".

Now, I realize that no one can be interested in my attitude toward eschatology. However, since April 3, 1912 I have had neither fear nor dread of death. My sole trouble, in this connection, during the past eleven years has been the fear that I might die before some issue in which I was interested had been definitely settled. At the present, by way of illustration, there is the Ruhr, and prohibition, and the bonus, and the 1924 elections, and the growth of my three boys — I am anxious to see whether they remain short like their father or become tall fellows.

To this list of things to think about is added now the reception that will be given Anker Larsen's prize novel in the United States. The American people cannot afford to do anything but buy it in great quantities and read it with great interest. For it has received a prize that makes our prizes seem like mere pittances. And it was selected from the great mass of manuscripts by a committee the intelligence and dependability of which are quite beyond reproach: Vilhelm Andersen, distinguished professor of literature at Copenhagen, Francis Bull, professor at Christiania, Carl Naerup, noted historian of Norwegian literature, Axel Garde, somehow associated with Gyldendals, and Ludvig Holstein whose species of fame is, I admit, unknown

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to me. Here then are four men, and most probably five, whose judgment it would be injudicious to question. But my own first reading of the novel leads me to contend that this work is less interesting than the novel by Peter Lykke-Seest which came out in Norway about a year ago and which has already been discussed in these columns. I mean "The Great White Fold" which, like "The Philosopher's Stone", treats the theme of religious psychology. This initial opinion, however, I set up tentatively; for I read Lykke-Seest under more favorable conditions than I read Anker Larsen. Moreover, the former's work consists of but 276 pages as compared with the 503 pages of Anker Larsen. It is easier to become enthusiastic about small things than about bulky ones, especially when the whole of this bulk goes to the depiction of the small people of a small Danish town. "The Philosopher's Stone" is a village story after the fashion (in technique and characters only) of that altogether impossible novel (1920) by Knut Hamsun, "The Women at the Well".

But the novel is a huge success over there. Frederik Hegel, president of Gyldendal, said the day the prize was awarded:

> The entire affair has given much greater satisfaction than we ever anticipated. We had no idea that such a great work, written by a Dane, would be submitted. We had no idea that there would be so many contestants. We had no idea that we should be able to select nine other novels of such high standing that to bring them out in the immediate future would be our pleasure and our duty.

This might be regarded as excessive language were it not for the fact that it cost Gyldendals eighteen thousand dollars to talk that way. Probably "The Philosopher's Stone" will improve on second reading; many a bit of literature has in my case.

Unlike so many European novels, "The Philosopher's Stone" is not divided into "parts"; it is divided into chapters, of which there are seventy-four. Somewhat as in an old fashioned English novel, each chapter is given a caption. From the American point of view, it has far too many paragraphs; these average certainly not more than three lines each. If the translator does not do his duty here, his page is going to look forbidding. There is abundant if not abnormal reference to other writers, such as Strindberg, Cooper, Tennyson, Jacob Böhme, and Kipling. Strangely enough, the American characters speak English, while the Swedish characters speak Swedish. And, more or less after the style of Homer, there are certain set ideas that reoccur with bizarre frequency. Here is one: *Hvad er dog livet for noget forunderligt noget* (what a strange thing life is)! That is really the thesis of the book: Life is hard to understand under any conditions; without the aid of the occult, of spiritism, of religious psychology, of mysticism, it cannot be understood at all. With the aid of these life becomes explicable in the sense that they make us willing to believe that there are certain features of life which we are not supposed to comprehend. And behind and underneath all these words I think I see and hear Anker Larsen saying that there may be some humbug connected with religion; eliminate it however from the scheme of things, and the best of men will degenerate while the worst will become worse than the beasts of the jungle. He never says this in so many words, but his characters act it out.

Of characters there is a complete village. We are introduced to twelve different people in the first chapter.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The opening scene is a churchyard with the familiar playground. On page two we read:

> Oh, of course they went to church, but not to worship God: they went for amusement. The preacher was a talent; he was an orator who could captivate. But when the people went home they went with that feeling of exaltation that they would have had after a performance in the theatre or an emotional lecture. Their fancies were set vibrating, but a religious life was not in them.

That is familiar enough.

What will the American people do with this eighteen thousand dollar novel, over eighteen thousand copies of which were sold in little Denmark before the ink was dry?

There is in the novel, one might say of course, since it came out of Denmark (which is anything but rich in novels), the standard amount of comment on suffering, distress, poverty, illegitimate children, murder, and general as well as unmitigated anguish. Of leading characters, there is Pastor Barnes, who arouses his congregations in the manner above referred to, though he has never been quite himself since his wife died and he preached her funeral sermon. His specialty is funeral discourses, but of late he has been wont to emphasize the helplessness of man in the face of death. His parishioners do not take kindly to such apparent unfaith. Then there is a queer person, the "Candidate", age forty-two, who trots through this entire story. Intellectually and spiritually, he is at once down and out and all in — if we may use such language as Anker Larsen himself can employ. It is he who closes the book with the familiar Biblical words: "And Enoch walked with God. And then he was not, for God took him."

Of the subordinate characters, there are three boys who represent three distinct phases of life: Pastor Barnes's son Christian (there is another character in the novel of the same baptismal name, though he insists on spelling it "Kristian", a point which seems overworked), Jens Dahl, and Holger Enke. Holger is of illegitimate birth and becomes a murderer. Christian Barnes has the soul of a mature man while still a mere stripling. He falls in love with Helen Strömstad while both are in the elementary school. She marries a worthless person. Christian goes to Copenhagen to study. Though brilliant he lacks will power. Struck down with illness and given up as hopeless, he is snatched away from the hospital and seemingly from death by an unusual heroine only to land in California where a Danish-American woman has a psychic institute. She places him in charge of a cowboy, he becomes a horse breaker, and so on and on until he returns to Denmark completely restored in health but without his faith. His old father meets the prodigal son at the front gate.

Jens Dahl is the opposite of Christian in every way. He is the mystic of the novel. At the close of a wholly peculiar life he commits suicide. If Jens Dahl reminds of Rasputin, Holger Enke reminds of those highwaymen who turn evangelists. After a life of unrelieved crime, he sees God. The influence of the Candidate on him has been unmistakable.

Such is the content in the rough. And this expression is chosen purposely, for the story is a bit rough once in a while. For example, a child asks what snow is. He is told that it is cotton falling from God's ears. Anyone who knows children knows that this explanation motivates a subsidiary question: Why does God keep cotton in his ears? Answer: So that He may not hear all the ugly things

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that men say. Then there is another character, a youth "who was so raw that the flies were always lighting on him". Shades of Fyodor Dostoyevsky, one of whose great novels Constance Garnett translated under the rubric of "A Raw Youth"!

As the reader may readily see, however, there are more things between the lids of this book than I have even hinted at; and some of them are good. But I must save enough space for mention of the other nine novels which Gyldendal found so superior that they are all to be published immediately. Laurids Bruun's "Twins" deals with the life of two little boys until one of them dies at the age of four. Johannes Buchholtz's "Little Arrows" gives the recipe for the happy life in common of two people. It is announced as "a gospel of love". Bruun and Buchholtz are already well known to the American public.

Frederik Carsten's "Victory" treats of the life of a poor illegitimate child who meets with a goodly measure of material success. Andreas Haukland's "The Norns are Spinning" is a legendary tale of the farthest north. Agnes Henningsen's "Power of the Child" discusses the relation of parents to children. The leading characters are a woman who lives on an estate in Jutland and her grown son. Josef Petersen's "The King's Sacrifice" is an historical novel laid in ancient Canaan. Frederik Poulsen's "A Midas Day Came Over the Land" is a satirical, humorous war story. Mr. Poulsen is also known to American readers. Palle Rosenkrantz's "The Junkers of Lindenborg" deals with the life and customs of the last two generations. And Alexander Svedrup's "Erik Gudmand" is a novel of entertainment. The scene is located at Elsinore.

It is highly probable that each of these nine children of Calliope will come out in English dress; some of them, according to a statement from Gyldendal, are already being bargained for. If so, September 19, 1923 will have been a red letter day in the annals of Scandinavian literature in America. It has already become that for Copenhagen. Hardly had the awards been made public when Gyldendal received a note from a Norwegian congratulating the firm on "being able to recruit the efforts of ten semi-idiots all of whom were willing to help out in the big advertisement". Jealousy, the jaundice of the soul, lends color to the world everywhere.

There is but one explicit reference in Anker Larsen's novel to the philosopher's stone, the elixir of life (page 122). I had read just that much of it when Chaucer's words occurred to me. They seemed appropriate. If the admonition expressed in them seems derogatory, it is to be construed in this light only from the American point of view. This book shows what may happen to a man when he boasts that he is a free thinker. The theme then is ultra-timely; for what is being more vigorously discussed in the United States at present than religion? But timeliness itself does not make a highly prized epic. I am inclined to doubt that Anker Larsen has handled religious psychoses in a way that will captivate us. For however much we may admire the Danes and everything they have, from cooperative dairies to philologists, we are poles removed from them in things of the spirit. Chaucer, on the other hand, would have made a capital American had not the accident of chronology debarred him from this privilege.

ALLEN W. PORTERFIELD

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Notes From France

SUMMER months may be a lazy period for publishers. They are not so for authors. The Pontigny summer meetings of this year were more brilliant than ever. Paris winter life, with its destructive though stimulating turmoil and disorder, affords no atmosphere for serene and patient literary production. I should not be surprised, therefore, if some of the best pages written in this country were dated from Brittany, from the Alps, from the Provence coast, although their authors may be true Parisians. And as I am spending a few days in that other region, neither French nor Spanish, which belongs to the exceptional race of the Basques—a race and a language related to no others—I find that Jean Giraudoux, Pierre Drieu la Rochelle, Maurice Donnay, Henri de Régnier, and a good number of other "colegas" of mine have had the same idea. More literary neighbors here than I ever had on the hill of Montparnasse. They all adopt the national Pyrenean attire, to which only a few are entitled by right of birth or descent. If their outward appearance is to react upon their thoughts and mental activities, the literary production of the coming year may show a rich amount of sobriety, virility, and elegance.

As for books which dare to come out in this unholy season, virility, at least, is to be found in "L'Hécatombe" (Nouvelle Librairie Nationale), Léon Daudet's fifty-third and (for the present) last volume. The Royalist leader, who stands ready to make France safe from democracy if only the occasion arises, proves that the Republican régime is responsible for extensive modern wars. We thought it was Kaiserism. He proves, or rather recalls, that he and his party saved France from disaster in the hands of the *"défaitistes"*. If the classical "Who won the war?" were asked in Léon Daudet's presence, I am not sure that he would think first of Joffre, Foch, Pershing, Haig, or the unknown soldier. His modesty would probably force him to remain silent.

More sobriety and more elegance characterize the works of Guy de Pourtalès. A literary critic of high standing, a translator of Shakespeare, the author of "Marins d'Eau Douce" which is the first volume in a series of novels, he has just given a Dialogue to the "Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Française", called "La Parabole des Talents". The book is dedicated to André Gide; and Pourtalès has indeed in common with Gide a profound gift for interpreting the Bible and the accomplishment of having translated "Hamlet". This time, the war is in the background. A man destined to die within the night talks with his ancestors, with ghosts which are of a race with the Shakespearian ghosts. Apart from the far reaching words, there is, in the very form of the dialogue, an interesting attempt to give a new frame to the new thoughts of our time.

Among the works of Edouard Estaunié, "L'Empreinte", "La Vie Secrète", "Les Choses Voient", "L'Appel de la Route" (Perrin) are best known. The "Cahiers Verts" have now published a shorter book of his, "L'Infirme aux Mains de Lumière", which has all the qualities of his long novels; this story of self sacrifice and solitary heroism is even more delicately composed.

We were rather disappointed in "Gatouna et l'Amour", by Maurice Larrouy; it is not up to the mark set by "Rafael Gatouna, Français d'Oc-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

casion" (Grasset). Yet we have a premonition that sooner or later, Larrouy (who is the author of "L'Odyssée d'un Transport Torpillé", one of the few French books concerned with the war on the sea) will write a first class novel. May it be his next one.

A new anthology has been born to us. Compiled by Robert de la Vaissière, it is devoted to French poetry of the twentieth century (Crès) and is a sort of sequel to the "Poètes d'Aujourd'hui" issued a few years ago by Van Bever and Léautaud (Mercure de France). Much criticism has been raised against this new book, as the case always is with modern anthologies; yet, such books are so useful, especially to foreigners who want to get a general view of French letters, that I should advise caution in the blame. I understand that M. de la Vaissière has neglected Larbaud, Lucien Fabre, and Jean Louis Vaudoyer, and failed to choose the most characteristic fragments of Claudel or of Valéry. But an anthology is not a monument cast in bronze. Later editions may complete or correct the first one; as it is, I find this book extremely serviceable and I do not hesitate in recommending it to students of modern French literature, who cannot get all the books by all the poets who have written since 1900. As for people who *do* get all the books and therefore *can* do their selecting themselves, I admit that they could dispense with anthologies.

Georges Grappe is one of the best French essayists. His studies on Sainte-Beuve, on Cardinal Newman, on Goethe, on Stevenson, are among the most authoritative. His new "Life of J. H. Fragonard" (Crès) is a pleasant book on a pleasant subject. Few people, among admirers of Fragonard, knew that the painter's life had been so strangely in harmony with his art. Fragonard was successful, lovable, a great traveler and a perfect representative of the happy eighteenth century. What a contrast with the teachings of his countryman Cézanne, as they appear from the new book by Elie Faure (Crès)! Elie Faure, who wrote the now famous "Histoire de l'Art" in four volumes, and the less famous yet capital essay on "Les Constructeurs", was particularly qualified to speak of Cézanne, to explain his influence and to underline the moral importance of his intervention in modern French art.

Mentioning translations in these "French notes" seems a bit useless or paradoxical. Yet the fact that "Marius the Epicurean" appears in French, at the same time that George Moore's study on Walter Pater is published in the "Revue de Genève", Pater's "Platon et le Platonisme" brought out at Grasset's, and a curious attack on Pater to be found in "Le Rose et le Noir" by Georges Duthuit, seems to prove that Walter Pater is from now on to be counted among those Anglo-Saxon writers whose influence on French literature cannot be ignored.

I feel still better justified in mentioning another translation, that of "Trois Mystères Tibétains" by Professor Jacques Bacot, for the Bossard collection of oriental classics. Tibetan religious and dramatic art, expressed in that language which is intermediary between Hindustani and Chinese, has remained so thoroughly closed to western readers, that a translation of these three plays should be a literary event of importance to all of us; Fitzgerald's translation of Omar Khayyam brought the Persian poet not to England alone, but to the whole western world. Professor Bacot is doing a similar service to us with these versions of "Tchrimekundan", "Nansal", "Djroa-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

zanmo", queer and charming legends which, however remote, show strange points of contact with the fairy stories of our own homelands.

PIERRE DE LANUX

Iceland Interviews

REYKJAVIK, the capital city of Iceland, although it has only a population of some 18,000, could compete favorably with any city in America in its ratio of great men. Four days there this summer provided me with interviews with two dramatists, one painter, one novelist, and one musician, all of them known to every one of their countrymen, and most of them known internationally. And had I started to interview everyone who made some pretense, and worthily, too, at being a poet, I should probably have had to stay the entire summer. It is no exaggeration to say that in Iceland almost every second man is a poet. I should go further and state that every second man is also a musician, for never have I heard such excellent singing as that of the congregation in the Lutheran church in Akureyri, Iceland's second largest town.

Einar Kvaran, Iceland's greatest novelist, according to all the other literary men with whom I conversed, has been selected by the Swedish committee of the Nobel Foundation as a candidate for this year's Nobel Prize in literature. The afternoon spent with him was most interesting, for he spoke excellent English, has traveled extensively in America, Germany, Denmark, and Spain, and has made a close study of the literature of many countries. He confessed to a keen liking for the Russian. "Yes, it is indeed gloomy at times, and sometimes even ghastly. But they do it so well. I admire them for it, and I read to see how it is they do do it so extraordinarily well. I read the Russians again and again, and although it may seem almost discourteous to admit it to you, I hardly have time to read modern American literature, and consequently cannot express my opinion on it. The last thing I recall reading was Winston Churchill's 'The Inside of the Cup'. I find time, however, always to continue the English classics. Dickens, Thackeray, Scott are never very far away from me. It may seem strange to you, but I have never happened to read Thomas Hardy. Kipling, like all the rest of my countrymen, I have read over and over. He is most popular with all Icelanders. And Shakespeare, too, we have had translated into Icelandic for us. Yes, we are indeed a reading people, as your Professor Fiske of New York once said of us. He stated that there are twenty-five per cent more books printed in Iceland, in proportion to the population, than in England. A volume of poetry, selling in Iceland for what would be the equivalent of three dollars, has run through a first edition of 2,500 copies, a second edition of 2,000, and is now in the third edition of 3,000. I wonder how these sales would compare with the sales of your most popular fiction." (For amusement, I figured it out roughly, and found that an American novel would have to run to billions of copies to keep pace with these sales!)

It was rather difficult to interview Asgrimur Jonsson, the foremost Icelandic painter, because he spoke no English, and I spoke no Icelandic. However, through the kind efforts of Mr. Jokumsson, the librarian of the Public Library in Reykjavik, I obtained a few ideas regarding the status of painting in this far away cultured

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

country. I was rather delighted to hear that the Icelandic painters have not been influenced by the modern tendencies in painting. There is no futuristic school in Iceland, no impressionistic school. Nature, in her varying moods, and especially nature in Iceland, provides subjects for her native sons who have chosen to devote themselves to the art of painting.

Iceland may be said at the moment to be making great strides toward a future for herself in the field of drama. Through the efforts of Eidri Einarsson — dramatist, translator, and writer of political and economical treatises, for more than fifty years the "father" of the theatre in Reykjavik — the amusement tax which is levied by the Althing, the Icelandic parliament, upon its people, started in October to go toward the theatre. This means, so Mr. Einarsson told me, that within the next ten years a grand new national theatre will be built in Reykjavik, equipped with the very latest modern innovations, designed from the finest plans the world can produce. It is hoped to have this theatre ready to open in the year 1930, the thousandth anniversary of the Althing, the oldest parliament in the world. In this year, it is anticipated that those of Iceland's children who have emigrated to different parts of Canada and the United States will return to their mother country, to take part in the anniversary celebrations.

Gudmundur Kamban, the Icelandic dramatist and novelist who has had some of his plays translated into English recently, was in Iceland this summer supervising the filming of his first Icelandic drama. His company is chiefly composed of Danes from Copenhagen, where, in addition to being stage manager of the Folk Theatre, he carries on his writing of both plays and novels and manages this cinema company. Kamban confessed that he had lived two years in New York, but added, "not long enough to like it." He deplores the decadent condition of the stage in England and Germany, hopes that New York has improved since he was there, and informed us quite firmly that Denmark is to the fore in matters dramatic. He blames the stage managers, not the public, for the low type of play which has been produced in recent years. He claims that the public really wants good plays, but that the managers have not awakened to the fact that good plays pay!

Only four days in Reykjavik — but it was long enough to make me painfully aware that, on this side of the water, too little do we appreciate the inherent culture of the people dwelling in what we imagine to be merely what its name suggests: an Ice Land.

MAURINE ROBB

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE GOSSIP SHOP

EDWARD KNOBLOCK returned not long ago from Hollywood, where he has been assisting Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford in the preparation of their motion pictures. He was in town in time for the opening of "The Lullaby", his new play written during the course of one trip across the Atlantic, which is one of the greatest box office successes of the year. Knoblock told us of days with Fairbanks, planning the story and production of "The Thief of Bagdad", then quoted to us a string of figures which were staggering enough: how many buttons were used in making the picture, etc., etc. Then this veteran playwright told us of how he used to rewrite plays so that the real authors of them would think they'd done it themselves. "The star or the manager would come to me, I'd see where the play was weak. I'd give my ideas to the star, then she would approach the author with a dazzling smile. 'I have the grandest idea!' she'd say, and with wiles quite as important as any she ever used on her audiences, she would persuade him to change the play. If the dialogue wasn't good, I'd touch it up in the same way." "You must have felt almost like a psyche—or at least the subconscious", we suggested. He then told us of his methods of collaboration with Arnold Bennett when they were writing "Milestones". He would write a scene, Bennett would rewrite it, and so on to the completion; or Bennett would write a scene and the same process would ensue. Knoblock was born in New York City, was graduated from Professor Baker's playwriting course at Harvard, and as a naturalized British citizen served in the British army during the war.

This note, which we reprint from "Great Thoughts", will be of interest to Stevenson lovers.

PUSH GAILY ON

The *Presbyterian Churchman* of South Africa had a feature of special interest, headed "An Unpublished Poem by Robert Louis Stevenson." The editor says: "While on active service in France the Rev. J. N. M. Paterson, of King William's Town, was shown by a fellow-officer a manuscript copy of the following verses. This officer assured him that they had been sent by R. L. Stevenson to his father on the death of a common friend and had never been printed. The officer was subsequently killed, and his father died not long after." The poem is as follows:

Though he that, ever kind and true,
Kept stoutly step by step with you,
Your whole long gusty lifetime through
Be gone a while before;
Yet doubt not, soon the seasons shall restore
Your friend to you.

He has but turned a corner; still
He pushes on with right good will,
Thro' mire and marsh by heugh and hill,
The self-same arduous way
That you and he through many a doubtful day
Attempted still.

He is not dead, this friend; not dead,
But on some road, by mortals' tread,
Got some few trifling steps ahead,
And nearer to the end;
So that you, too, once past the bend,
Shall meet again, as face to face, this friend
You fancy dead.

Push gaily on, brave heart, the while
You travel forward mile by mile,
He loiters with a backward smile,
Till you can overtake;
And strains his eyes to search his wake,
Or, whistling, as he sees you through the brake,
Waits on a stile.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

George Barr McCutcheon tells us that his trunks are full of material he wrote when he was a boy in school and of later things composed up until the time his first novel was published. Somehow our talk drifted to the inadvisability of telling plots to people. "You never know", said Mr. McCutcheon, "just when you're going to hit on a plot that the person you're telling it to is thinking of too. That ruins it for both of you. Then, too, plots are in the air somehow—Harold MacGrath's 'The Puppet Crown' appeared almost simultaneously with 'Graustark' and neither Mr. MacGrath nor myself knew that the other was at work on a story that had such marked similarity." At this point we were joined by the genial Walter Trumbull, that champion sport writer. It seems he recently broadcasted the Notre Dame-Princeton game. Like most of those who talk over the radio, he had no visualization of his audience until his postman said: "Say, that wasn't funny what you said about dropping your pipe, over the radio on Saturday!"

We print this month the rules of two prize contests of widely varying import.

A prize contest open to all writers resident in the United States who have never before had a novel published in book form is announced by Curtis Brown, Ltd., literary agents, 116 West 39th Street, New York, to whom all inquiries should be addressed. Curtis Brown, Ltd., make the announcement on behalf of Dodd, Mead & Company, Pictorial Review and Famous Players-Lasky Corporation, the organizers of the contest, who offer a cash payment of $13,500, plus book royalties, for what is judged to be the story best suited for publication as a magazine serial, and as a book, and for motion picture adaptation. Manuscripts should be submitted before June 1, 1924, to Curtis Brown, Ltd. A decision will be reached by September 1, 1924. Worthy stories not winning the cash prize will be given consideration with a view to their acceptance on the usual terms of payment. Indeed, the organizers state that the competition would be a partial failure if at least a dozen good novels were not found which could be accepted on fair terms.

The Forest Theater of Carmel, California, offers a prize of $100 for an original play suitable for presentation on its outdoor stage (56x60 feet) during the summer of 1924.

There is no limitation as to subject or scope, though a full evening play, approximating two hours' acting time, is desired.

Manuscripts, to be considered, must be in the hands of the secretary before February first, 1924.

The Forest Theater can assume no responsibility for manuscripts unless accompanied by sufficient return postage.

A nom de plume is not necessary.

Any play chosen will remain the property of its author after production, the right to accept or reject plays remaining with the directors of the Forest Theater.

Address: Mrs. V. M. Porter, Secretary Forest Theater, Carmel, California.

Charles J. Finger, who publishes "All's Well" out in Fayetteville, Arkansas, breezed into the office this morning. He is a delightful gentleman—white hair blown back from a ruddy forehead, large square hands, quick speech; and he accentuated the impression by wearing a white tie and a red handkerchief turned in around his collar. Finger works on his ranch in the mountains, to which he retired from city life some years ago. He writes a good deal, in addition to editing his paper; in fact, he has three books coming out this autumn, with three different publishers. His short stories appear here and there in the magazines. He has been collecting South American folk legends for some years, and these will form one of his new volumes. How many tired business men would like to imitate this experiment of Finger's: to leave active life, buy a ranch in the west, take children and wife, and lead a life of contemplation and of creation. Most of the American writers visit Mr. Finger sooner or later. It is not exactly a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lonely existence he leads on his ranch. We have heard of an Arizona ranch on sale for a few thousands and we are just watering at the mouth. Oh, for the desert and the mountains!

George Grubb sends us this clipping from London:

A link with George Eliot has passed away in Miss Eleanor Mary Evans, who died at Leamington, and is being buried to-day at Chilvers Caton Church, Nuneaton. She was the novelist's niece, daughter of Mr. Isaac Evans, the prototype of "Tom Tulliver", and brother of Mr. Robert Evans, who was the original of "Adam Bede".

Robert Evans was land agent to the Newdigates, of Arbury Hall, near Nuneaton, as was his son and his grandson after him, and his celebrated daughter, Mary Ann Evans, was born at a farmhouse close to the mansion. The Evans family is, in fact, closely associated with the aristocratic Newdigates, whose family church is Chilvers Caton, where the novelist's niece is being buried.

Though George Eliot used her father for the prototype of "Adam Bede", the scene of the novel is Bede Cottage, near Ellastone, Derbyshire. Adam's brother, Seth, was also drawn from life, and the tourist can still see at Bede Cottage the little workshop where the two brothers worked. In the churchyard at Wirksworth are the graves of Seth Bede and Dinah Morris, and in the village is the Methodist Chapel where Dinah preached.

Cyril Hume is a rugged, tall, rather robust young man not long since out of Yale. He is as young as was F. Scott Fitzgerald when he wrote "This Side of Paradise". What a difference in viewpoint is here! Hume wrote poetry, for the most part, during his college course. He was a disciple of Stephen Benét and a great friend of Thomas Caldecot Chubb, another young Yale poet. Hume sat him down and wrote the first two books of "Wife of the Centaur", then showed them to Chubb, who was enthusiastic. On the strength of his friend's encouragement, Hume went into the country for six months and finished the book. It met with immediate cordiality in publishing quarters. Chubb, seeing his friend's success, gave up his job and

Cyril Hume

went west on a ranch for six months; now *he* has practically completed a novel. These young men and women who are engaged in novel writing are singularly wholehearted about it. Robert Roe, the poet, came into the Gossip Shop the other day. Last summer, before he married and disappeared for the wilds of Maine, he was well on toward the end of a novel. Now he has decided, on his return to town, that the last part must be completely rewritten. Likewise a young lady, whose completed manuscript we have read and liked, has given up a position as teacher in order to revise it. The last part is better than the first —all right, the first shall be rewritten —and off she goes accordingly.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Some of the book plays that have been submitted in the Children's Essay Contest are proving delightful. Others of the essays are good, too. We select for publication this month the contributions of Anna Kaplan of Port Chester, New York, and Josephine L. Miles of Los Angeles, California. We are printing them exactly as they are written. The announcement of prize awards and the first and second prize winning essays themselves will be published in the January number.

A BOOK PLAY

By Anna Kaplan

Age 15

Jo March, and her three friends, Peggy Raymond, Kate Cornstalk and 'Beautiful Joe', are spending their vacation at Goshen, New York. Here they make the acquaintance of Jim Hawkins and his schoolmates, the Turner Twins, Ned and Laurie.

During a camping out frolic (at which they are chaperoned by Lena Rivers, a neighboring summer visitor) they meet a fellow camper, David Dunne, who is persuaded to join them. They adhere to the saying, "The more, the merrier."

When they are all abed and sound asleep, Jim, who is ordinarily a sound sleeper, thinks he hears stealthy steps. Not hearing them repeated he lies down again. The noise now becomes louder and more insistent. Walking over to a neighboring oak tree he sees a most unusual sight.

Titania and Oberon are seated in great splendor on a mossy throne. In an oak tree which forms a canopy and also a balcony, are seated numerous visitors and attendants, fairies, dwarfs, elves, pixies, dryads, gnomes, water sprites, witches, and goblins. In the centre of an arena-like space stand two dwarfs in the garb of bull-fighters. Their 'bull', a huge bumble-bee, stares around in wild surprise. Jim watches the amazing spectacle.

Pricked by pins, which the dwarfs use as swords, the bumble-bee is at length stirred to action. It is an interesting fight. No blood is shed, and the bumble-bee is rewarded amply for his exertions. The dwarfs are pronounced by the king to be victors, and receive, as prizes, brand new acorn cup suits of armor with an acorn cup as helmet, and they also receive new war horses, which are nothing more nor less than beetles. Then all the actors in this tableau notice Jim.

They become very angry because of his having witnessed their festivities. Therefore they hold a counsel of war to decide his fate. At length they decide to have some laughing at his expense. They take him to the lately occupied arena and place him in the center. Then they tie his eyes and tell him he is going to meet a real bull in mortal combat. Placing a wooden sword, which they make for the occasion and which he thinks is real, in his hand they leave him, withdrawing to a short distance from the arena.

Jim, thinking the 'bull' will come upon him at any minute, from he knows not what direction, starts slashing around, almost overthrowing himself in his frantic endeavor. At last, finding himself still alive, and hearing roars of laughter, he becomes suspicious. He puts his hand to his eyes to tear the band away, when he awakes with a start!

Next morning, after relating his dream around the breakfast table, he is given sound advice by Laurie, to the effect that one should not read "A Midsummer Night's Dream" before retiring.

A BOOK PLAY

By Josephine L. Miles

Age 12

Scene I is in the office of the Editor of the Bookman Magazine. Row of books on Editor's desk.

Mrs. Nickleby and her friend, Bettsy Trotwood, are very tired of book life. They wish to see the world and find how it is jogging along without them. They persuade their best friends, Ivanhoe and his lady, Rowena, Robin Hood, Hannibal of Carthage, the Roman, Mark Antony, and Jack of the Beanstalk to go with them.

Then comes the trouble of knowing how to travel. Antony says a chariot but Aunt Bettsy will not ride in such a silly thing. Ivanhoe suggests horses and soon they are quarreling loudly about it.

The Bookman looks up from his work and asks the trouble for he cannot write in such noise. They tell him and after thinking awhile he takes a pile of magazines from the table and suggests putting one of his friends in to each of these so that they may see the lands of today through which the magazines go.

The book folk are very much elated as they get into their magazines and even Antony smiles. They are really to see the modern world!

Scene II is again in the Bookman's office

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

several months later, just as the office boy brings in a pile of old magazines. As he puts them on the desk he says, "These are some old magazines, sir, and they make queer noises inside, sir." The Bookman smiles understandingly and, when the boy leaves, opens the covers of the books.

JACK *(jumping out)*: Hello, Mister Bookman! We had the greatest time!

MRS. NICKLEBY: Great time nothing! All the silly things the world has now! I should think they would pay a fortune to get back to the quiet sensible way things used to be!

MISS TROTWOOD: They have auto-somethings in England that make loud noises and go so fast they are worse than mules!

IVANHOE: Sir Bookman, they do not even have castles in Brittany. The nobles do not wear armour and we did not see one single tournament!

ROWENA: And Sir Bookman, the knights and ladies work in the fields! Some of the nobles live in huts with sleeping chambers next to the kitchens! How poor they must be. My lord Cedric would hate his England now!

ROBIN HOOD: The world is a fool's home. Folk live in houses all day long and never practice archery or cudgeling. The world is a home for fools I say, so I will gladly go back to my life in the greenwood.

JACK: Aw! Nobody likes the world but me. I like the boys and the adventures! You ought to hear the boys talk. Listen! Ya big stiff, if ya don't shut up I'll sock ya one on the bean!

AUNT BETTSY TROTWOOD: What foolish language is that? Has this terrible world made you crazy?

JACK: It isn't a crazy world it's a fine world. Why I could make lots of money for my mother here! If I could climb up one of these beanstalk houses I bet I'd find a giant and steal his money bags!

MARK ANTONY: Friends, Romans and Countrymen, lend —

MRS. NICKLEBY: We're not Romans thank goodness!

ANTONY: Friends, Bookfolk and Countrymen, lend me your ears. I love the world as it is today. Still there are great speeches in the forum. Still Rome will conquer the world. Still she will stir the land in times of peace for she is a country of warriors!

HANNIBAL: Yes, Rome will always trouble the land in times of peace. Rome is the trouble maker of the world as she was in my day.

ANTONY *(drawing his sword)*: I challenge you to battle!

JACK: Oh wait Mister Antony won't you tell me something? Don't you think that if I got to the top of one of these beanstalk buildings I could catch one of the giant's geese that some people call airplanes? They don't cackle, they just hum so I could get away from the giant easily if I caught one!

ANTONY: Hum — er well — er —

OFFICE BOY: There is a man to see you, sir.

BOOKMAN: Oh! Just a minute! Get into your books quick!

All the book people but Jack and Mark Antony scurry into their books.

ANTONY: I shall go back and make speeches in the forum.

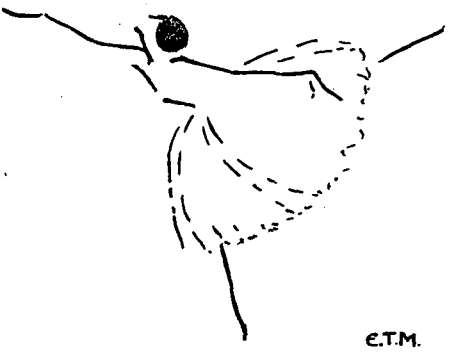
JACK: I want to catch a goose.

BOOKMAN: No, no, get back to your books quickly I say!

JACK *(going back to his book with Mark Antony)*: Aw, I thought I could catch a golden goose!

Curtain

The most difficult task set before us is the order, from our editor, to write a Gossip Shop note on the annual visit of Anna Pavlowa. All sense of proportion leaves us and we begin to write eulogistic free verse in worship of this divinity of the dancing world. This year we mean to let E. T. Middleditch say with a few strokes of her fine pen all that we should wish to put down here in appreciation of what seems to us the perfect art, and simply add that we were fortunate enough to attend the Russian Ballet on an evening when it was giving its



Pavlowa

"Oriental Impressions", gleaned from Madame Pavlowa's recent travels in the east. The poppy-like skirts of the dancers in the two Hindu numbers

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

were the richest we have ever beheld, in shades of tangerine, grape, wine red, yellow, dark blue, and orchid. These are interesting as well as beautiful innovations and somewhat of a relief from the usual, though exquisite, "Swan Dance" and "Gavotte".

Robert Nathan is one of the quietest young men in the entire world, we feel. He is slim, slight, dark; was at

Robert Nathan

one time, when he was in college, a champion boxer of some sort; plays the piano with beauty and precision, writes music himself. He impresses one as quietly sardonic, aloof, and only very occasionally gay. He spends his time quietly in New York City working on his music, his poetry, and his novels. Of all the young writers of his age he seems to us one of the most careful and consistent. He has, of course, no definite office-confining work, and he is not obliged to turn out pot boilers. Even so he shows poise and sanity in his decision to write the things that he considers beautiful and good. "The Puppet Master", which is reviewed elsewhere in THE BOOKMAN this month, is even better than his former "Autumn". His first novel, "Peter Kindred", we did not like. Nathan's aunt is Annie Nathan Meyer, the dramatic critic and playwright.

This tart rejoinder from Miss E. D. wins the prize this month for a review of a review. The editor of THE BOOKMAN feels that the lady who wrote it couldn't possibly have understood Mr. Van Vechten's book, and we recommend that she have it carefully interpreted to her by, say, an eminent psychologist. If she then feels as she does now about the book, the editor of THE BOOKMAN despairs of modern young women.

"What a pity", bemoans John Farrar of Carl Van Vechten's "The Blind Bow-Boy" — "what a pity for a man who can write so well to write such a sublimated edition of a Broadway scandal sheet." And what a pity, say I, for a critic with the discernment and talents of Mr. Farrar, to lose his sense of values and spoil a just and excellent review by this platitudinous — almost priggish — regret. Mr. Farrar is entirely correct when he states that the book contains some decidedly nasty parts. It does. But, to me, this nastiness is robbed at the offset of its most offensive aspects, by the delightful, extravagant *unreality* which is the keynote of the book. Perhaps it is the very flippancy and frivolity employed, in discussing so grave a matter as sex, that has annoyed and upset Mr. Farrar. He does not deplore the books of D. H. Lawrence or Sherwood Anderson as unworthy of their respective authors' talents nor does he use the word *nasty* in describing them, shocked by them as he may be. Yet there is nothing in "The Blind Bow-Boy" that can compare in sheer, revolting nastiness with certain passages in "Women in Love" or "Many Marriages". The difference is that the "Bow-Boy" is not pretending to be serious, and the others are. Van Vechten is at his best in a light, satirical vein and being a modern young man he cannot possibly write a novel that does not deal largely with sex. The logical outcome of these two facts is "The Blind Bow-Boy". And as we seem obliged to have sex, like the poor, always with us, an entertaining, witty, and readable treatment of the eternal subject is a refreshing change from the morbid, disagreeably realistic, confusingly biological works that have flooded the world

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for the past three years. No, Mr. Farrar, "The Blind Bow-Boy" deserves better treatment at your hands. A Broadway scandal sheet — no matter how sublimated — with touches as delicious as the Pistache Taxi incident, a style as brilliant as Van Vechten's, and a personage to gossip about as delightfully fascinating and improbable as Campaspe, would be difficult to find. In fact I defy you to produce one.

If it is true that all living organisms renew themselves every seven years, the new season in the Pasadena Community Playhouse is an important one. Starting in 1917, during the height of the World War, this unique experiment in the field of the people's theatre has now pretty well established itself and is on the point of emerging from the experimental stage into that of an accepted fact. The community playhouse has proved its field, at least in Pasadena. It has demonstrated that non-professionals can give plays satisfactorily. Each year, more than a thousand Pasadenans take part in the various departments of this activity; and they put on a wide variety of plays such as the people could not otherwise see. They are amateurs in the best sense of the word, because they play for the love of it rather than as a business. The repertory for the season of 1923-24 includes the following plays, to be produced at the rate of two each month: "Old Lady 31", Rachel Crothers; "The Duenna", Richard Brinsley Sheridan; "The Torch-Bearers", George Kelly; "The Merchant of Venice"; "The Dover Road", A. A. Milne; "If", Lord Dunsany; "The New York Idea", Langdon Mitchell; "Justice", John Galsworthy; "Treasure Island", Robert Louis Stevenson; "Dear Brutus", J. M. Barrie; "The Vegetable", F. Scott Fitzgerald; "To the Ladies!", Marc Connelly and George S. Kaufman; "Seventeen", Booth Tarkington. In line with Maurice Browne's recent advocacy for little theatres to do more original things—meaning plays heretofore unproduced — the Pasadenans make at least two "first time on any stage" presentations each year. To encourage playwriting, they cooperate with the local centre of the Drama League of America annually in holding a play contest. The Community Players put on the winner. Playwrights everywhere are bidden to send in their plays for this competition by January 1, 1924. There is no restriction as to theme or style of play. The contest is divided into two classes—for one act plays, and for full length plays.

Peter B. Kyne, Irishman, author, and professional Californian, accompanied the Lloyd George party as far as Canada as American guide, officially selected because of his representativeness as a writer and an American citizen. We believe that no alternates were named, and hasten (somewhat late, perhaps!) to suggest Har-

Peter B. Kyne

old Bell Wright, "Jim" Curwood, and Zane Grey. Kyne is now back in New York living at that refuge for struggling authors, the Waldorf-Astoria, while he watches his new novel "Nev-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

er the Twain Shall Meet" climb steadily in the best seller lists.

Irene J. Crandall sends us news from Chicago. We should like to have been there, for Herbert Quick is one of our favorite authors.

Saturday evening, October 20, the Chicago Chapter of Bookfellows and the Allied Arts Association gave a dinner for Herbert Quick, which was one of the most notable gatherings of literary folks held in Chicago this year. Mr. Quick's publisher came up from Indianapolis to protect him from the hospitality of his friends. The critics were represented by Llewellyn Jones and Stuart Pratt Sherman. Mr. Jones said that he thought Mr. Quick's work was discouraging to young authors because his novels demonstrate that it takes a lot of living to prepare for writing of this type. Stuart Sherman found the charm in "The Hawkeye" and "Vandemark's Folly" to lie in the fact that they stir in the reader a love of this great middle west that most recent literature has painted in such drab colors. Louise Ayres Garnett, author of "Master Will of Stratford", "On the Hilltop", and other charming plays, read an exquisite poem, "Master Quick you are a Rare Planter", in which she captured the love of the land that the novelist of the Iowa prairies has put into his work.

At the close of the dinner John Stahl, the toastmaster, introduced the guest of honor. As this large, distinguished, white haired gentleman rose, he brought from his home, Coolfont Manor, Berkeley Springs, West Virginia, to intense, nervous Chicago the serenity that comes from contact with the soil and the long view of life gained by the passing of many years. To meet the author of "The Hawkeye" is to want to know his novels better.

We have a fatal weakness for sets of books. We like them in our library. We like to read through them one after another. We suspect that this may be a bad habit; but it is one of our pet bad habits. We wish that when we were a child the Macmillans had conceived the idea of the "Children's Classics" which they are now issuing. This series of well bound and well illustrated books contains many familiar titles, from a children's Homer to Hans Christian Andersen. Even better than these solid blue books are the volumes of "The Little Library" — orange, neat, compact. Among them are "The Memoirs of a London Doll", "The Magic Forest" by Stewart Edward White, "The Rose and the Ring", and others. If you like sets we recommend these to you as being well edited, well made, and reasonably priced.

Jeffery Farnol, short, dark, with his eyes peering at you through thick glasses and his voice coming at you in quick little rushes, returned to America for a few days, just as his "Sir John Dering" was being published. He is a gay little man; he would have to be so in order to imagine such gay and beruffled heroes as he does. Farnol says that he's already twelve chapters along in a new novel and that the novel after that will be set in America. We accused him of having come to America to report the Papyrus-Zev horse race; but he denied this. "Just business—and to renew old acquaintances", he assured us. (The last time we met the emphatic little gentleman he was reporting the Dempsey-Carpentier fight, and was filled with fistic news and enthusiasms.) His publisher introduced him to W. Somerset Maugham who was standing near. They formed a rather unusual contrast. Maugham is here watching the rehearsals of his new play "The Camel's Back" which is, he tells us, a farce. "After we've taken out all the jokes that I think aren't funny, and all the jokes that Mr. Selwyn thinks will not go in America, I don't know just what *will* be left!" Maugham is of medium height, dark, somewhat pale, with deep keen eyes. He is gentle, yet a trifle sardonic, as if he were amused by and thoroughly detached from life. If you have never

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

read "On a Chinese Screen", Maugham's series of notes and sketches on the Orient, dig it out from the library and compare it with Dorothy Canfield's "Raw Material". Here are two books which will show you vividly how a novelist gathers his materials.

Perhaps it could not be considered strictly as a New York art exhibit, but we reveled in a Spanish house shown at Wanamaker's. How can anyone build a house without planning for it a pink paved courtyard with twisted columns and plants in pots? And how could anyone who had any money left after paying the dentist resist buying the color prints of Gustave Baumann at the Montross Gallery? Happy prints of trees, well framed. His big painting, "Zuni Night Ceremony", reminded one of a stage setting, with the actors masked and dancing Indians. The transition of soft colors, the variety of shapes, and spotting of darks all made for a most satisfying whole. The Montross exhibit concerned the New Mexico painters. Despite our aversion to Indians, due to an overdose of "Hiawatha", we found much to praise. We passed a pleasant enough hour at the Women Painters and Sculptors Exhibition, although with the possible exception of Paulette Van Roeken's painting of Independence Hall, Philadelphia, the only thing that really moved us was Alice Morgan Wright's statue, Medea, which won the National Arts Club prize. It was strong in modeling with sharply edged planes, yet it was as a whole so indefinite that it appealed to the imagination. We walked ridiculously around and around it to enjoy it from every point of view, and we went home and dug out these lines from Euripides for it:

I dazzle where I stand,
The cup of all life shattered in my hand,
Longing to die. . . .

We have had many good laughs over A. P. Herbert's "'Tinker, Tailor', A Child's Guide to the Professions". We liked particularly his chanty, "The Sailor", a gay piece, with an illustration by George Morrow that makes us think of Christopher Morley all dressed up and thoroughly happy.

From "Tinker, Tailor"

The sailor he sits in the harbour if he can;
He was obviously meant for a literary man.
He loves to see the ships putting out for
Rio Grande,
And he gives three hearty cheers for the
good dry land: —

So away, boys, away! putting out for Rio Grande!
There's a lot to be said for the good dry land;
And the sea is a thing he never could stand,
For the wind's in the mizzen cross-trees! . . .

First nights have not been without their gaieties this season. The most brilliant we have happened to attend—although it was sad enough before the evening closed—was "Launzi". Here was Ethel Barrymore, radiant in a box, and Grace George, radiant also, in a box just behind. Here was Zimbalist and Alma Gluck, Charlie Chaplin (forced to leave, choking from bronchitis in the middle of an act, but returning presently). The dress rehearsal of "Windows" was similarly effective, with Carl Van Vechten to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whom we were most ceremoniously introduced. Apropos of Van Vechten, we have a story or two to tell. We'll tell only one of them this time. We went to speak at a girls' school the other morning. We had expected to find girls of eighteen or twenty and had planned to talk on almost anything that happened to come into our head. Instead, we found ourself facing the flower-like faces of young ladies of twelve, fourteen, sixteen?—we're no judge. So we talked of perfectly respectable authors, nice safe authors. At the end of the period there was half a minute left. "Any questions?" we asked. "What do you think of Carl Van Vechten?" one voice piped up—and we subsided. The night of "Windows" we saw also Ben-Ami, about to appear in a new Theatre Guild production, Roland Young, Margaret Mower (lovelier than ever), George Jean Nathan, etc., etc. We were vastly entertained to observe Charlie Chaplin at a dinner party the other evening. He is the spirit of acting, if it ever existed embodied in human form. His face displays a constant parade of fiery quick emotion. His hands are never still. He reminds one of Punchinello and Peter Pan, of Til Eulenspiegel and Puck.

Every day Murray Hill becomes more and more cluttered with debris as new buildings spring into being. Alas! On the corner is a sign: "This plot of ground will be improved by the erection of a twelve story office building." But will it? Who is to say that a twelve story office building is improvement over a nice brown-stone front house? So, contemplating a graceful Irish workman bent upon his task, we suggested to our child-familiar that he write us a verse. He did as follows:

If I were a welder
  Perched on a beam,
Scattering golden sparks about,
  In a shimmering stream,

Although my overalls were blue,
  And covered thick with dirt,
Although my throat were very brown,
  And tears were in my shirt,

I'd dream I was an angel,
  Among the clouds on high,
Throwing nice new stars about
  To decorate the sky.

But the child refused to be contented with one verse—he had been reading "The Puppet Master"—and he wrote another. It was even worse.

I'd like to be a puppet
  With a nose of fiery red,
Then I'd never have to take a bath,
  I'd never go to bed.

But I'm an independent child,
  I don't like to be led,
I like to dance, I like to sing
  What comes into my head.

Now if I were a puppet,
  With a nose of fiery red,
I'd have to do exactly
  What the Puppet Master said.

Well, we said, it's coming on Christmas. Why don't you finish off with a jolly piece about holly or something? "Aha," said he, "'or something' is good. Try this one."

I met an angel on the street
  And it was very cold,
The angel said, "It's Christmas Eve,
  I'm hungry and I'm old,

I need a bed, I need a hat",
  The wandering angel said,
"For heaven is very far away
  And I have been misled."

Now isn't it a funny thing,
  That in the crowded street,
No Christmas shopper saw her wings,
  Nor sandals on her feet?

And as I smiled at her there shone
  A pure and holy light,
She placed six lilies in my arms,
  And vanished in the night.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED